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RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

AND

SELECT ODES,

BY

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE:

EDITED, WITH NOTES, BY

J. W. CONNOR, B. A.

Head Master, High School, Berlin.

WARREN HASTINGS:

AN ESSAY BY

LORD MACAULAY,

EDITED WITH NOTES, INTRODUCTIONS, AND THEMES
FOR COMPOSITION,

BY

G. MERCER ADAM,

Late Editor of "The Canadian Monthly," &c.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE object of the Notes accompanying the present selection from Coleridge's poems—a selection that unhappily excludes his finest and most characteristic work—is simply to explain and illustrate the text, and to aid the teacher in his efforts to awaken admiration for the poet's genius and to foster a love for English Literature. It is assumed that, in spite of the misdirected efforts of certain departmental examiners, the teachers of this Province know a more excellent way of spending the "Literature-hour" than tormenting their pupils with analysis and parsing, and cramming them with derivations that throw no light upon the author's meaning. The biographical sketch, being intended for the pupil's use, does not go into discussions of the impropriety of the term, "The Lake School," or of the influence of Coleridge and Wordsworth on the literature of the present century; these the teacher will find in hand-books and in such works as Mr. Traill's able *Life of Coleridge*. It is to be hoped, however, that no one will adopt that author's one-sided view of Coleridge's philosophy without reading Principal Shairp's essay on Coleridge, in "Studies in Poetry and Philosophy," and Principal Tulloch's article in the *Fortnightly* for January, 1885.

BERLIN, 21st May, 1885.



The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been
admitted to the office of the Secretary of the State since the
last meeting of the Board of Education. The names are given in
alphabetical order of the surnames. The names of the persons who
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LIFE OF COLERIDGE.

Early Years.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE was born at Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire, in 1772. Coleridge, Scott, Wordsworth, and Southey were all nearly of the same age. In his ninth year the former lost his father, the Rev. John Coleridge, from whom, rather than from his practical but uncultivated mother, he inherited his great intellectual powers. Soon after, the orphan boy, already a poet, was sent to Christ's Hospital, the "Blue-coat School," then under the management of the Rev. James Bowyer, a cruel, but Coleridge says, a very able teacher. The dreary life he led there may have strengthened his tendency to day-dreaming,* which, he tells us, was his only play. Imprudence in allowing his wet clothes to dry on him made a great part of his life a "long disease," which in time enfeebled his power of will and destroyed his poetic faculty. Meanwhile he made great progress in study, translating the hymns of Synesius into English verse before his fifteenth year. A passion for metaphysical speculation absorbed his whole mind for a time. His life-long friend, Charles Lamb, himself a "Blue-coat" boy, gives us this interesting description of the young poet:—

"How have I seen the casual passer through the cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the speech and the garb of the young *Mirandula*), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Iamblichus or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in the Greek, or Pindar, while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed with the accents of the *inspired charity boy*."

From this absorption in metaphysics he was recalled to poetry by the perusal of Bowles's sonnets; and he himself tells us:—"There was a long and blessed interval, during which my natural faculties were allowed to expand, and my original tendencies to develop themselves—my fancy, and the love of nature, and the sense of beauty in forms and sounds."

Coleridge's university career opened brilliantly with his winning a gold medal for a Greek poem on the Slave Trade,

* Who has not heard how the orphan boy alone in the sea of humanity that surged in the streets of London accidentally touched the pocket of a gentleman, and to his exclamation, "What! so young and so depraved?" replied that he had fancied he was Leander swimming the Hellespont?

but was soon darkened by debt unwittingly incurred, and discouragement as to his future, the Unitarian notions which he had imbibed being a barrier to his entering the Church, and his dislike for mathematics obstructing his advancement in the University. Accordingly, in a fit of dejection he left Cambridge and enlisted in a cavalry regiment, in which he never rose above the awkward squad, "Trooper Cumberbatch" being the laughing-stock of his comrades for his clumsiness, though endeared to them by his kindly disposition. Discharged after a few months, he returned to Cambridge; but having met the poet Southey, then nick-named "Citizen Southey," he joined in his plan for founding a "Pantisocracy," or all-equal government, on the banks of the Susquehanna. While waiting at Bristol for the funds required to "freight a ship with implements of husbandry," Coleridge delivered a course of eloquent lectures on the French Revolution, afterwards published as the *Conciones ad Populum*. In 1795 the emigration scheme was given up, Coleridge marrying Sara Fricker, sister-in-law of his fellow-Pantisocrat Robert Lovell, and Southey her sister Edith. In 1796 Coleridge set on foot a liberal periodical, the *Watchman*, in order "that all might know the truth, and that the truth might make us free," and undertook a tour to obtain subscribers, preaching in the Unitarian chapels of the great towns in the North. This tour, charmingly described in pp. 81-84 of the *Biographia Literaria*, resulted in a list of some thousand subscribers, who had nearly all dropped off before the ninth and last number appeared, the poet's want of tact and business capacity having neutralized the brilliancy of his writing. He afterwards renounced Unitarianism, and, like Wordsworth and Southey, became a staunch upholder of the established order in Church and State. His Toryism, however, was modified by his early Liberalism, and his defence of religion seemed revolutionary to many good men of his time.

Coleridge as a Poet.

In 1797 his friend Cottle,* a Bristol bookseller, published a volume of Coleridge's poems, which included his "Effusions," or sonnets on Burke and other distinguished men, the *Lines on an Eolian Harp*, which reflected the domestic happiness of his early married life, and the *Religious Musings*, written on Christmas Eve, 1794, denouncing the French war, and containing some fine and some rather tedious passages.

To this part of his life—i.e., 1794-1802—belong all Coleridge's best poems; and those contained in this volume mark three distinct phases of his poetical career, viz. :—

1. His revolutionary period—the *Odes to the Departing Year* and *to France*.

* Cottle gives in his *Recollections* a long list of books which Coleridge then intended to write, and which he never even set about.

2. The culmination of his genius in the *Ancient Mariner*, and, we should add, in *Christabel*. Akin, though inferior, to these are *Kubla Khan* and the *Dark Ladie*.

3. The decline of his genius, marked by the beautiful *Ode to Dejection* (1802), and the somewhat inferior *Lines to William Wordsworth* (1806).

Here it may be needful to refer to the often-remarked connection between great political movements and the development of poetic genius. The influence of the French Revolution on the literature of our century is not less remarkable than that of the stirring times of Elizabeth on Shakspeare and his contemporaries, and of the Civil War on Milton. It affected not only the subjects of poetry, but also its style, and Coleridge and Wordsworth showed the superiority of a natural mode of expression over the stilted and artificial diction of Pope and his school. Coleridge's finer taste and his sense of humour preserved him from the extremes into which Wordsworth is betrayed, and his thoughts are never debased by meanness of language.

The *Ode to the Departing Year*, written in the last week of 1796, is certainly superior, both in thought and in diction, to any ode that had appeared since Milton's *Ode on the Nativity*, not even *The Progress of Poetry* and *The Bard* excepted. But the events of 1797 showed that the cause of France was by no means that of liberty, and the poet's disappointment and sorrow found expression in the *Ode to France*.

But 1797 brought its compensation. In that year, Coleridge, then residing at Nether Stowey, met at Racedown the poet Wordsworth, whose "Descriptive Sketches" he had admired while at Cambridge. The two poets were charmed with each other, and their association did much to mature the genius of both. From their conversations on poetry originated the *Lyrical Ballads*, which were intended to illustrate "the two cardinal points of poetry; the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of the imagination." It was agreed that Wordsworth was to contribute poems on subjects chosen from every-day life, while in Coleridge's part, "the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural, and the interest aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real." He was "to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of the imagination that willing suspension of disbelief which constitutes poetic faith." Coleridge's part of the joint volume, which appeared in 1798, virtually consisted of the *Ancient Mariner* alone. It was projected, as

Wordsworth tells us, in 1797, in order to defray the expense of a short tour, and begun as the two poets and Miss Wordsworth walked along the Quantock Hills. "Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention, but certain parts I suggested; for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the old navigator the spectral persecution."

Wordsworth goes on to tell that having lately been reading in Shelvocke's *Voyages* about albatrosses, he suggested the killing of the bird, and furnished a few lines, but that his style proved so widely different from Coleridge's that he left the matter to him, and that when the *Mariner* outgrew the original limits, the poets thought of a volume, the "Lyrical Ballads," whose publication marks an era in English literature. *Christabel* and the *Dark Ladie*, in which the poet says "I should have more nearly realized my ideal," were begun in 1798, but never finished—the fate also of the *Three Graves*, which might have proved the best of Coleridge's narrative poems.

Christabel, unrivalled for its weird interest and its perfect melody, inspired Scott in writing his *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. This perfection of melody also distinguishes *Kubla Khan*, written in 1797, from the recollection of a dream, and indeed, in some measure, whatever Coleridge wrote.

In 1798 Coleridge, by the wise generosity of the sons of Wedgwood, the eminent potter, in settling an annuity of £150 upon him, was enabled to spend nearly a year in Germany, chiefly in Gottingen, where he gained an insight into German philosophy and theology, especially the systems of Schelling and of Kant.

Coleridge as a Journalist and Critic.

On his return, Coleridge entered in earnest upon journalism by "undertaking the literary and political department of the *Morning Post*, on condition that the paper should thenceforward be conducted on certain fixed and announced principles." This undertaking not only proved advantageous to the *Post*, but added dignity to British journalism. But here Coleridge's poetical career abruptly ends, his translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein* and the second part of *Christabel* being his last extensive works. In 1800 he removed to the Lake country, settling at Keswick. Beautiful as is the situation, the climate quickened the seeds of disease long since sown by his youthful carelessness, so that his health was completely broken down.

The *Ode to Dejection* (1802) shows us what ravages disease had made on his spirits and strength, and also what brought his poetic activity to an end just when his genius seemed about to attain its full power. He tells us that "each visitation" of disease suspended his "shaping spirit of imagination,"

and his only plan was "not to think of what I needs must feel"—and to employ his mind in abstruse research. Worst of all, pain drove him to seek relief in opium, taken at first in the "Kendal Black Drop" as a remedy for "a rheumatic affection, with swellings at the knees and pains all over me." Too late, Coleridge found himself bound by a chain which his enfeebled will could not shake off. In hope that change of air might benefit him, he visited his friend, Sir John Stoddart, then judge in Malta, where the Governor, Sir Alexander Ball, induced him to act as his secretary for some months. The climate, however, did him no good; he became troubled with a difficulty in breathing, and, no doubt, the solitary life he led confirmed the habit of taking opium. In September, 1805, he continued his tour, spending some time in Naples and in Rome, where he met Tieck, the German poet, and Alston, the American painter. He returned to England in the sad state pictured in his *Lines to William Wordsworth*, written after hearing the recitation of the *Prelude*. The *Prelude* was inscribed to Coleridge, and the generous eulogy of his character and genius which it contains aroused the sad feelings expressed in the lines beginning,

"Ah! as I listened with a heart forlorn."

The history of the next ten years is most painful. "Worse than homeless" through having alienated his wife by the shiftiness, irresolution, and neglect of duty caused by his evil habit, broken in health, with impaired powers, forming many schemes, but persevering in none, Coleridge led an unsettled life, while his family took up their abode with Southey. We should, however, do Coleridge the justice to remember that he settled his annuity upon them. In 1809-10 he lived with Wordsworth at Grasmere, and published the *Friend*, a periodical intended to diffuse sound moral and political principles. In spite of the fine passages it contains, the *Friend* was too deep for the public, and reached only its twenty-eighth number. He delivered two courses of lectures, in 1808 and 1811, the latter being his famous lectures on Shakspeare and Milton, which, in the opinion of good judges, are by far the best exposition of Shakspeare's art. These lectures, together with his criticism on Wordsworth, in the *Biographia Literaria*, place him in the front rank of literary critics.

About this time he wrote for the *Courier*, but his articles are inferior to those he had written for the *Morning Post*. His tragedy of *Remorse*, acted in 1813 through Byron's influence, was received with great favor.

In 1816 the sad spectacle of the degradation of so mighty a genius came to an end. Seeing at last that his will was too weak to overcome his evil habit, Coleridge placed himself under the care of a surgeon, Mr. Gillman, of Highgate, whom he authorized to use coercion if needed. In time the efforts of Mr. Gillman, in whose house Coleridge lodged for the rest

of his life, were successful, and the remaining eighteen years of the poet's life were tranquil and useful.

Coleridge as a Philosopher.

Shortly after this happy change in his life Coleridge published his *Statesman's Manual, or the Bible the Best Guide to Political Skill and Foresight*, his two *Lay Sermons to the Higher Classes*, the *Biographia Literaria*, or *Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions*. He also re-issued *The Friend* in a form which made it almost a new work. In 1825 appeared the *Aids to Reflection*, of which Principal Tulloch says:—

"In his *Aids to Reflection* Coleridge may be said to have transformed and renewed the current ideas of the time about religion. * * * Coleridge's most distinctive work was to restore the broken harmony between reason and religion by showing how man is essentially a religious being."

In his later years he was engaged, with the help of Joseph Henry Green, in preparing for publication his "Magnum Opus," his *Christian Philosophy*, which he did not live to produce. Mr. Green, however, to a certain extent succeeded in setting forth Coleridge's doctrines in his posthumous work, *Spiritual Philosophy, founded on the teachings of the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. But it was not only by his writings that Coleridge influenced English thought. To Mr. Gillman's house flocked for years many of the most promising young men of the time, to whom Coleridge became almost an oracle. Carlyle's disparaging account of his conversation has had more weight than it probably will have hereafter, now that it is seen how much Carlyle indulged in detraction. A better, but confessedly an inadequate idea may be gained from the *Table Talk*, published by his nephew, Henry Nelson Coleridge, the husband of the poet's gifted daughter Sara. We may quote the statement of a more impartial hearer, Dr. Dibdin, that "the auditors seemed to be rapt in wonder and delight, as one conversation, more profound or clothed in more forcible language than another, fell from his tongue. As I returned homeward, I thought a second Johnson had visited the earth to make wise the sons of men."

In Mr. Gillman's peaceful home the poet ended his days, leaving us a precious heritage in criticism and philosophy, and above all in poetry, and a salutary warning, in the miseries of the middle years of his life, how little avail splendid powers, sound principles, and even religious aspirations, without firm resolution and constant watchfulness.

The date of Coleridge's death is the 25th of July, 1834. His Life was written by Gillman, and a volume of Reminiscences appeared in 1847 by Cottle, his publisher. See Shairp's "Studies of Poetry," Hazlitt's "English Poets," Swinburne's "Essays and Studies," also Carlyle's "Life of Sterling." The last named work should be read with caution.

WORKS OF COLERIDGE.



The following remarks, extracted from distinguished writers, and bearing on the works of Coleridge, especially the *Ancient Mariner*, will be found interesting and suggestive:—

The life of every day is going on gaily; the wedding guests are close to the festal doors, when Mystery and Wonder suddenly interpose in the way, shutting out everything else around. The sounds of the other existence are heard through them; and even by glimpses that life is visible—the merry minstrels “nodding their heads,” the bride in her blushes—but the unwilling listener has entered into the shadow, and the unseen has got hold of him. It is a parable not only of the ship and the albatross (which is hard of interpretation), but of mankind, a stranger upon earth, “moving about in worlds not realized,” always subject to be seized by powers, to which he is of kin, though he understands them not. “There is more of the invisible than the visible in the world,” is the poet’s motto, and with a great splendour and force of imagination he enforces his text. “There was a ship,” quoth he, and the weird vessel glides before the unwilling listener’s eyes, so that he can see nothing else. It comes between him and the feast, between him and the figures of his friends, which flit like ghosts out of the door. Which is the real, and which the vision? The mind grows giddy, and is unable to judge; and while everything tangible disappears, the unseen sweeps triumphantly in, and holds possession more real, more true, more unquestionable than anything that eye can see.

Throughout the poem this sentiment of isolation is preserved with a magical and most impressive reality. All the action is absolutely shut up within the doomed ship. The one man who is the chronicler of all, and to whose fate everything refers, is never withdrawn from our attention for a moment. We grow silent with him, “with throat unslaked, with black lips baked,” in a sympathy which is the very climax of poetic pain. And then what touches of tenderness are those which surprise us in the numbness and trance of awful solitude—

“O happy living things;”—

or this other, which comes after the horror of the reanimated bodies, the ghastly crew of the dead-alive—

“For when it dawned”—

When the tale has reached its height of mystery and emotion, a change ensues; gradually the greater spell is removed. As

the voyage approaches its conclusion, ordinary instrumentalities appear once more.

This unexpected gentle conclusion* brings our feet back to the common soil with a bewildered sweetness of relief and soft quiet after the prodigious strain of mental excitement, which is nothing like anything else we can remember in poetry. The effect is one rarely produced, and which few poets have the strength and daring to accomplish: sinking from the highest notes of spiritual music to the absolute simplicity of exhausted nature.—MRS. OLIPHANT.

Of his best verses, I venture to affirm that the world has nothing like them, and can never have; that they are of the highest kind, and of their own. They are jewels of the diamond's price, flowers of the rose's rank, but unlike any rose or diamond known. * * *

This poem (the Ancient Mariner) is beyond question one of the supreme triumphs of poetry. For the execution, I presume no human eye is too dull to see how perfect it is, and how high in kind of perfection. Here is not the speckless and elaborate finish which shows everywhere the fresh rasp of file or chisel on its smooth and spruce excellence; this is faultless after the fashion of a flower or tree.

The finest of Coleridge's odes is beyond all doubt the "Ode to France." * * * The prelude is magnificent in music, and in sentiment and emotion far above any other of his poems; nor are the last notes inadequate to this majestic overture.

Of all Coleridge's poems, the loveliest is assuredly "Christabel." It is not so vast in scope and reach of imagination as the "Ancient Mariner;" it is not so miraculous as "Kubla Khan;" but for simple charm of inner and outer sweetness it is unequalled by either. The very terror and mystery of magical evil is imbued with this sweetness; the witch has no less of it than the maiden; their contact has in it nothing dissonant or disfiguring, nothing to jar or deface the beauty and harmony of the whole imagination.—SWINBURNE.

Coleridge's thought may be almost said to be as wide as life. To apply to himself the word which he first coined, or rather translated from some obscure Byzantian, to express Shakspeare's quality, he was a "myriad-minded man." He touched being at almost every point, and wherever he touched it, he opened up some new shaft of truth, and his books contain some fragments of what he saw.

If a man wished to learn what genuine criticism should be, where else in our country's literature would he find so worthy

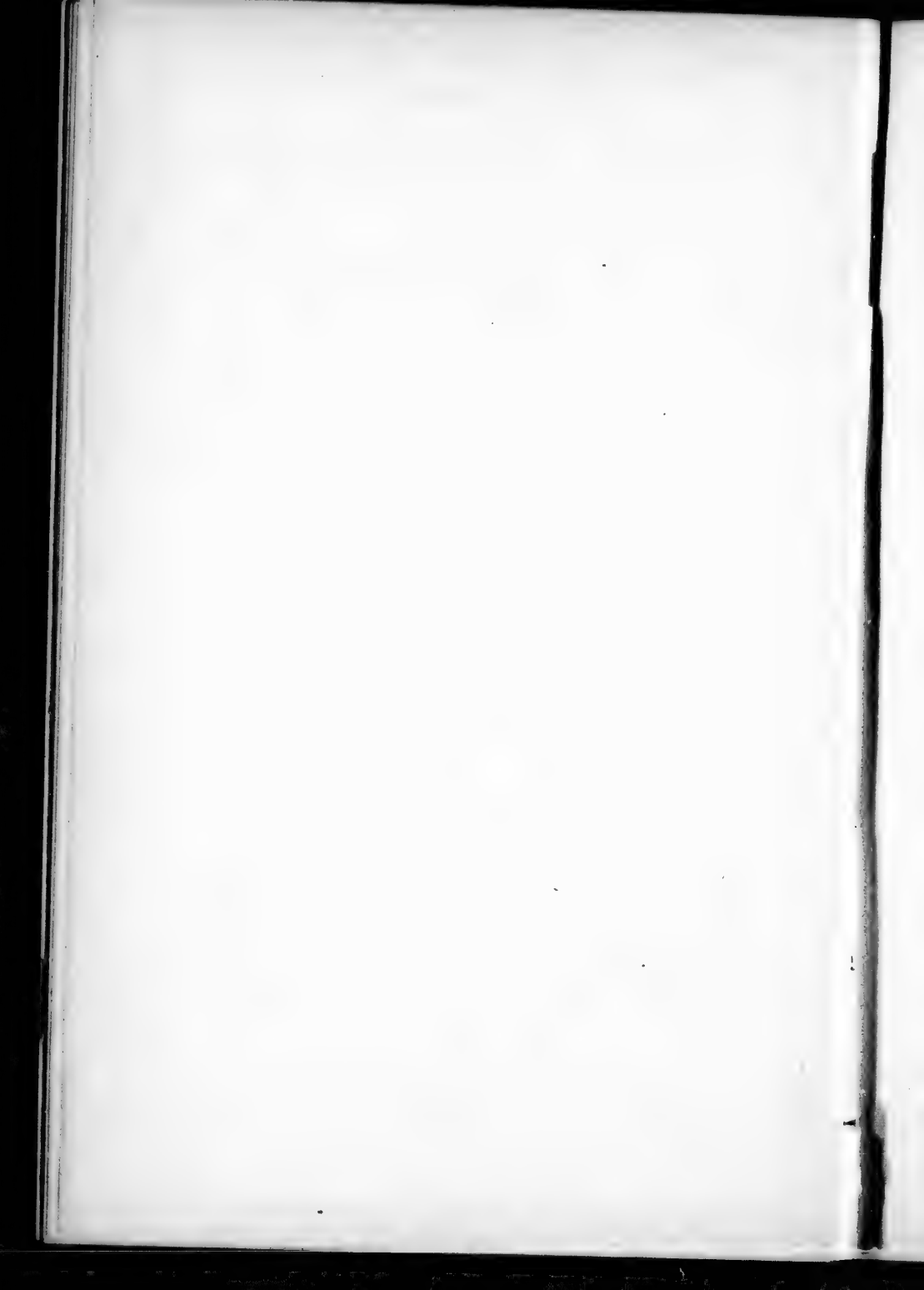
* In the lines, "He prayeth best who loveth best," &c.

a model as in that dissertation on Wordsworth? * * * In opposition to the blind and utterly worthless criticism which Jeffrey then represented, he thought out for himself and laid down the principles on which Wordsworth, or any poet such as he was, should be judged, and showed these principles to be grounded not on caprices of the hour, but on the fundamental and permanent elements which human nature contains. * * * There is more to be learned from that dissertation * * * than from all the reviews that have been written in English on poets and their works from Addison to the present hour.

But the best thing that can be said of him is, that he was a great religious philosopher. And by this how much is meant! Not a religious man and a philosopher merely, but a man in whom these two powers met and interpenetrated.

In this mood of men's minds, is there not something to be learnt from the experience of Wordsworth and Coleridge? Here were two men of amplest power, born into an age fuller of anarchic change than our own. They threw themselves fearlessly on their time, broke with old faiths and institutions in search of truth, set their faces to the wilderness, and after sojourning for a season there, came out on the other side and found peace. * * * If they returned in some sense to their first faiths, they did so, not in blind conservatism, not as grasping at mere tradition in despair of truth, but as having, after long soul-travail, discovered a meaning in old truths they had not divined before. After wandering many ways of thought, and having learnt in their wanderings to know themselves, they came back and found in Christian truth that which alone met their need.—PRINCIPAL SHAIRP.

Coleridge—blessings on his gentle memory! Coleridge was a frail mortal. He had, indeed, his peculiar weaknesses as well as his unique powers; sensibilities that an averted look would rack; a heart which would have beaten calmly in the trembling of an earthquake. He shrank from mere uneasiness like a child, and bore the preparatory agonies of his death-attack like a martyr. Sinned against a thousand times more than sinning, he himself suffered an almost life-long punishment for his errors, whilst the world at large has the unwithering fruits of his labours, his genius, and his sacrifice.—H. N. COLERIDGE.







The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone ;
 He cannot choose but hear :
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner.

20

The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
 Merrily did we drop
 Below the kirk, below the hill,
 Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward with
a good wind
and fair weath-
er, till it reach-
ed the line. The sun came up upon the left,
 Out of the sea came he !
 And he shone bright, and on the right
 Went down into the sea.

25

Higher and higher every day,
 Till over the mast at noon—
 The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
 For he heard the loud bassoon.

30

The Wedding-
Guest heareth
the bridal
music; but the
Mariner con-
tinueth his
tale. The bride hath paced into the hall,
 Red as a rose is she.
 Nodding their heads before her goes
 The merry minstrelsy.

35

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
 Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
 And thus spake on that ancient man
 The bright-eyed Mariner.

40

The ship drawn
by a storm
toward the
south pole. And now the storm-blast came, and he
 Was tyrannous and strong :
 He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
 And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
 As who pursued with yell and blow
 Still treads the shadow of his foe,
 And forward bends his head,
 The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
 And southward aye we fled.

45

50

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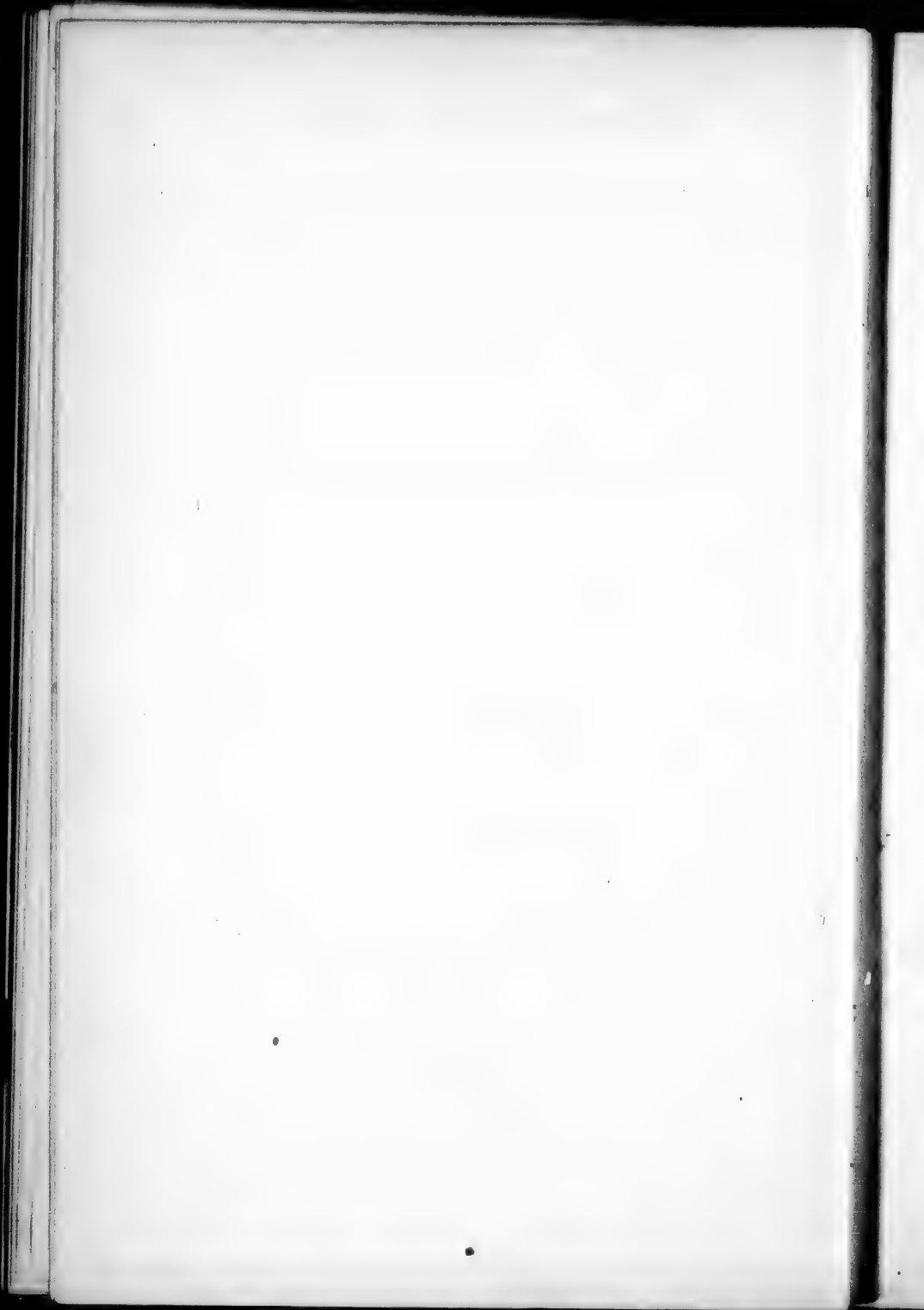
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And now there came both mist and snow,
 And it grew wondrous cold :
 And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
 As green as emerald.

The land of ice,
 and of fearful
 sounds, where
 no living thing
 was to be seen. And through the drifts the snowy clifts 55
 Did send a dismal sheen :
 Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken
 The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
 The ice was all around : 60
 It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
 Like noises in a swound !

Till a great
 sea-bird, called
 the Albatross,
 came through
 the snow-fog
 and was
 received with
 great joy and
 hospitality. At length did cross an Albatross :
 Through the fog it came ;
 As if it had been a Christian soul, 65
 We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
 And round and round it flew.
 The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
 The helmsman steered us through ! 70

And lo ! the
 Albatross prov-
 eth a bird of
 good omen, and
 followeth the
 ship as it
 returned north-
 ward, through
 fog and floating
 ice. And a good south wind sprung up behind ;
 The Albatross did follow,
 And every day, for food or play,
 Came to the mariners' hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud, 75
 It perched for vespers nine ;
 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
 Glimmered the white moon-shine.

The Ancient
 Mariner
 inhospitably
 killeth the
 pious bird of
 good omen. " God save thee, ancient Mariner !
 From the fiends, that plague thee thus ! 80
 Why look'st thou so ?"—With my cross bow
 I shot the Albatross !

PART THE SECOND.

The sun now rose upon the right :
 Out of the sea came he,
 Still hid in mist, and on the left
 Went down into the sea. 85

And the good south wind still blew behind,
 But no sweet bird did follow,
 Nor any day, for food or play,
 Came to the mariners' hollo ! 90

His shipmates
cry out against
the ancient
Mariner, for
killing the bird
of good luck. And I had done a hellish thing,
 And it would work 'em woe ;
 For all averred, I had killed the bird
 That made the breeze to blow.
 Ah wretch ! said they, the bird to slay 95
 That made the breeze to blow !

But when the
fog cleared off,
they justify the
same, and thus
make them-
selves accom-
plishes in the
crime. Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
 The glorious sun uprist ;
 Then all averred, I had killed the bird
 That brought the fog and mist. 100
 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
 That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze
continues, the
ship enters
the Pacific
Ocean and sails
northward,
even till it
reaches the
Line. The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
 The furrow* streamed off free :
 We were the first that ever burst 105
 Into that silent sea.

The ship hath
been suddenly
becalmed. Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
 'Twas sad as sad could be ;
 And we did speak only to break
 The silence of the sea ! 110

Ail in a hot and copper sky,
 The bloody sun, at noon,

* In the former edition the line was,

The furrow followed free ;

but I had not been long on board ship, before I perceived that this was the
 image as seen by a spectator from the shore, or from another vessel.
 From the ship itself the Wake appears like a brook flowing off from the
 stern.

85

90

95

100
y,

ew,

105

own,

110

as the
vessel,
m the

Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day, 115
We stuck, nor breath, nor motion ;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged. Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink ; 120
Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
That ever this should be !
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs 125
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white. 130

A spirit had followed them ; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels ; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantino-politan, Michael Psel-lus, may be consulted. [135
And some in dreams assured were
Of the spirit that plaguéd us so :
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.
And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root :
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

The shipmates in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner : in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck
Ah ! well-a-day ! what evil looks 140
Had I from old and young !
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART THE THIRD.

There passed a weary time. Each throat
 Was parched, and glazed each eye.
 A weary time ! a weary time ! 145

How glazed each weary eye !
 When looking westward, I beheld
 A something in the sky.

The ancient
 Mariner be-
 holdeth a sign
 in the element
 afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
 And then it seemed a mist : 150
 It moved and moved, and took at last
 A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !
 And still it neared and neared :
 As if it dodged a water-sprite, 155
 It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer approach, it
 seemeth to
 him to be a
 ship ; and at a
 dear ransom he
 freeth his
 speech from
 the bonds of
 thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked
 We could nor laugh nor wail ;
 Through utter drought all dumb we stood !
 I bit my arm, I sucked the blood, 160
 And cried, A sail ! a sail !

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
 Agape they heard me call :
 A flash of joy. Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,
 And all at once their breath drew in, 165
 As they were drinking all.

And horror
 follows. For
 can it be a ship
 that comes
 onward
 without wind
 or tide ?

See ! See ! (I cried) she tacks no more !
 Hither to work us weal ;
 Without a breeze, without a tide
 She steadies with upright keel ! 170

'The western wave was all aflame,
 The day was well nigh done !
 Almost upon the western wave
 Rested the broad bright Sun ;
 When that strange shape drove suddenly 175
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

145

150

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ood !

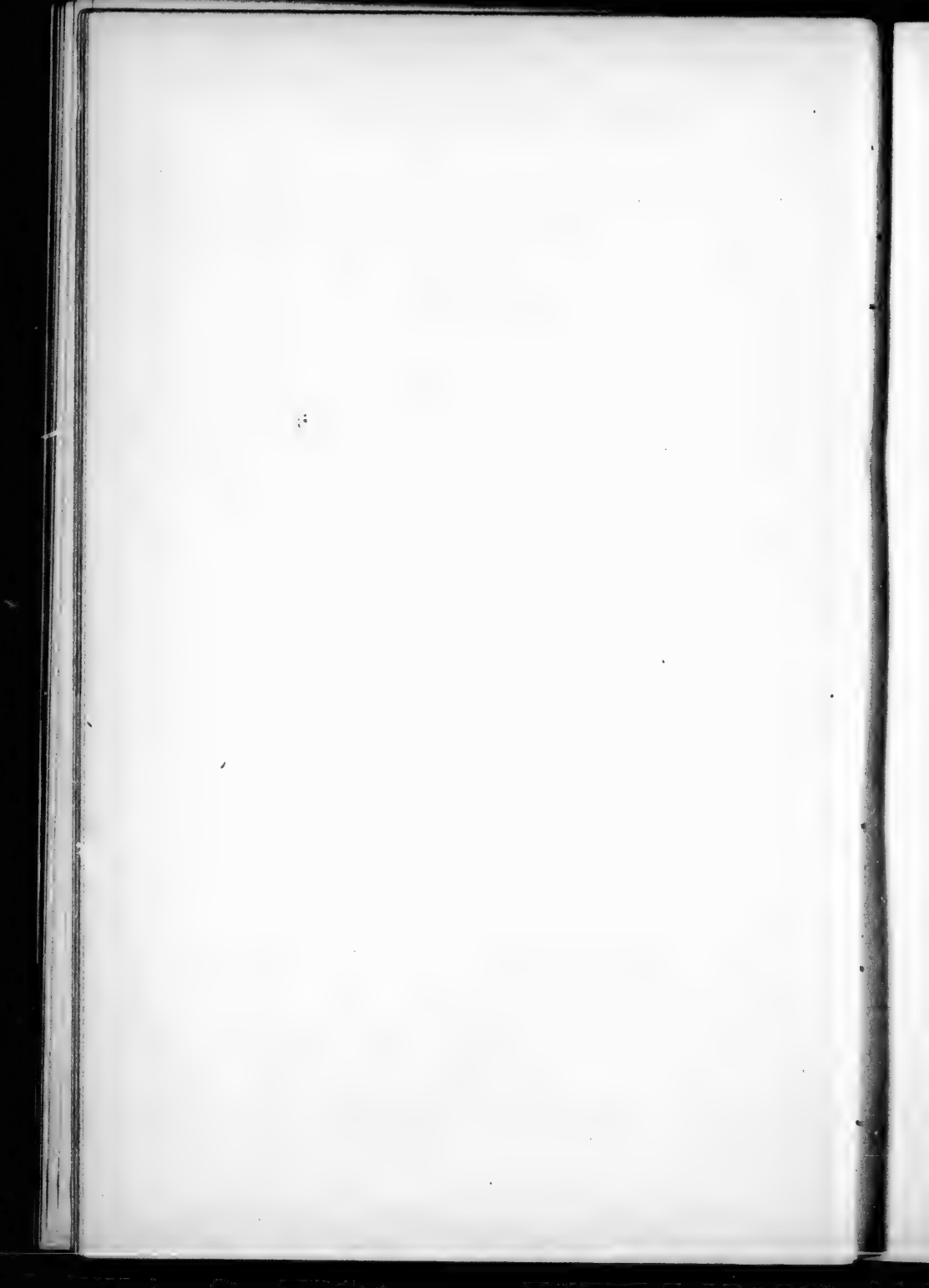
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It seemeth him
but the
skeleton of a
ship. And straight the sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's mother send us grace !)

As if through a dungeon grate he peered,
With broad and burning face. 180

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears !
Are those *her* sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossamers ?

And its ribs
are seen as
bars on the
face of the
setting Sun.
The spectre-
woman and
her death-
mate, and no
other on board
the skeleton-
ship. Like
vessel, like
crew ! Are those *her* ribs through which the sun 185
Did peer, as through a grate ?
And is that Woman all her crew ?
Is that a DEATH ? and are there two ?
Is DEATH that woman's mate ?

Her lips were red, her looks were free, 190
Her locks were yellow as gold ;
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The night-mare LIFE-IN-DEATH was she,
Who thicks men's blood with cold.

Death, and
Life-in-Death
have dined for
the ship's crew,
and she (the
latter) winneth
the ancient
Mariner. The naked hulk alongside came, 195
And the twain were casting dice ;
"The game is done ! I've won, I've won !"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out :
At one stride comes the dark : 200
With far-heard whisper o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up !
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip ! 205
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white ;
From the sails the dew did drip—

At the rising
of the Moon. Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon with one bright star 210
Within the nether tip.

One after
another.

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye. 215

His shipmates
drop down
dead.

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-
Death begins
her work on
the ancient
Mariner.

The souls did from the bodies fly,— 220
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

PART THE FOURTH.

The Wedding-
Guest feareth
that a spirit is
talking to him;

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand! 225
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.*

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand so brown."—

But the ancient
Mariner assur-
eth him of his
bodily life and
proceedeth to
relate his
horrible
penance.

Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest! 230
This body dropt not down.
Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on the wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony. 235

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie;
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

* For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton with him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797, that this poem was planned, and in part composed.

on,

215

220

225
n,

! 230

235

Words-
verton
n WAM

And envieth I looked upon the rotting sea, 240
that they And drew my eyes away :
should live, I looked upon the rotting deck,
and so many And there the dead men lay.
lie dead.

I looked to Heaven, and tried to pray ;
 But or ever a prayer had gusht, 245
 A wicked whisper came, and made
 My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
 And the balls-like pulses beat ;
 For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky 250
 Lay, like a load on my weary eye,
 And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
liveth for him Nor rot nor reek did they :
in the eye of The look with which they looked on me 255
the dead men. Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to Hell
 A spirit from on high ;
 But oh ! more horrible than that
 Is the curse in a dead man's eye ! 260
 Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
 And yet I could not die.

In his loneli- The moving Moon went up the sky,
ness and And no where did abide :
fixedness, he Softly she was going up, 265
yearneth And a star or two beside—
towards the Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,
journeying Like April hoar-frost spread ;
Moon, and the But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
stars that still The charmed water burnt away
sojourn, yet A still and awful red.
still move
onward ; and
every where
the blue sky
belongs to
them, and is
their appointed
rest, and their
native country
and their own
natural homes,
which they
enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy
at their arrival.

By the light Beyond the shadow of the ship,
of the Moon I watched the water-snakes :
he beholdeth
God's

creatures of
the great
calm. They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light 275
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam ; and every track 280
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty
and their
happiness. O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware ! 285
He blesseth
them in his
heart. Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The spell
begins to
break. The self same moment I could pray ;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank 290
Like lead into the sea.

PART THE FIFTH.

Oh, sleep ! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole !
To Mary Queen the praise be given !
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven, 295
That slid into my soul.

By grace of
the Holy
Mother, the
ancient
Mariner is
refreshed with
rain. The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew ;
And when I awoke, it rained. 300

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank ;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

75

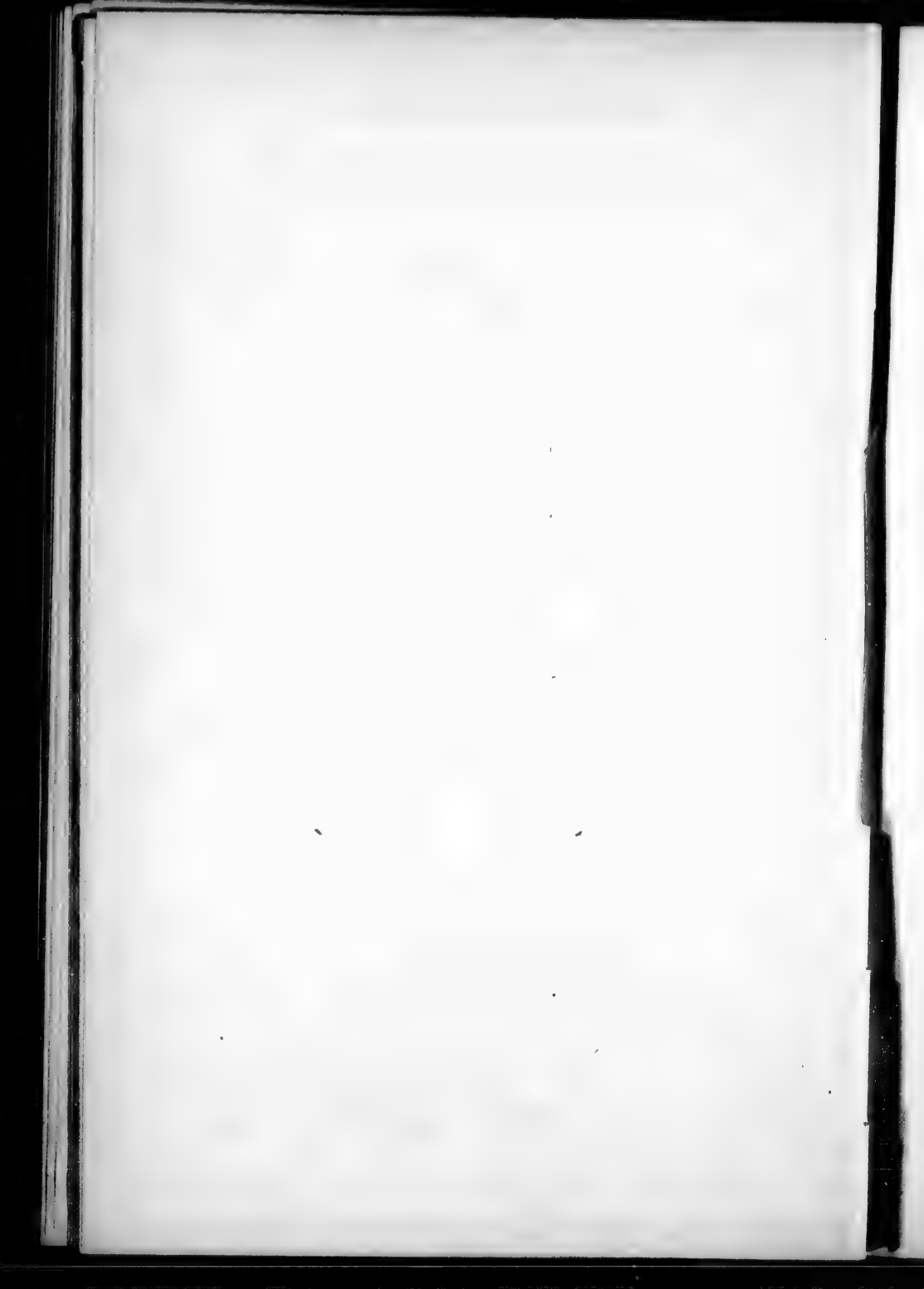
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I moved, and could not feel my limbs ; 305
 I was so light—almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth
sounds, and
seeth strange
sights and
commotions in
the sky and
the element. And soon I heard a roaring wind ;
 It did not come anear ; 310
 But with its sound it shook the sails,
 That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life !
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
 To and fro they were hurried about ; 315
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge ;
 And the rain poured down from one black cloud ; 320
 The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
 The Moon was at its side ;
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightening fell with never a jag, 325
 A river steep and wide.

The bodies of
the ship's
crew are
inspired and
the ship
moves on. The loud wind never reached the ship,
 Yet now the ship moved on !
 Beneath the lightning and the Moon
 The dead men gave a groan. 330

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
 It had been strange, even in a dream,
 'To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on ; 335
 Yet never a breeze up blew ;
 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
 Where they were wont to do :
 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
 We were a ghastly crew 340

The body of my brother's son
 Stood by me, knee to knee :
 The body and I pulled at one rope,
 But he said naught to me.

But not by the souls of the
 men, nor by de-
 mons of earth
 or middle air,
 b it by a blessed
 troop of angelic
 spirits, sent
 down by the in-
 vocation of the
 guardian saint.

" I fear thee ancient Mariner ;"
 Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !
 'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
 Which to their corpses came again,
 But a troop of spirits blest :

345

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
 And clustered round the mast ;
 Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
 And from their bodies passed.

350

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
 Then darted to the Sun ;
 Slowly the sounds came back again,
 Now mixed, now one by one.

355

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
 I heard the sky-lark sing ;
 Sometimes all little birds that are,
 How they seemed to fill the sea and air
 With their sweet jargoning !

360

And now 'twas like all instruments,
 Now like a lonely flute ;
 And now it is an angel's song,
 That makes the heavens be mute.

365

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
 A pleasant noise till noon,
 A noise like of a hidden brook
 In the leafy month of June,
 That to the sleeping woods all night
 Singeth a quiet tune.

370

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
 Yet never a breeze did breathe :

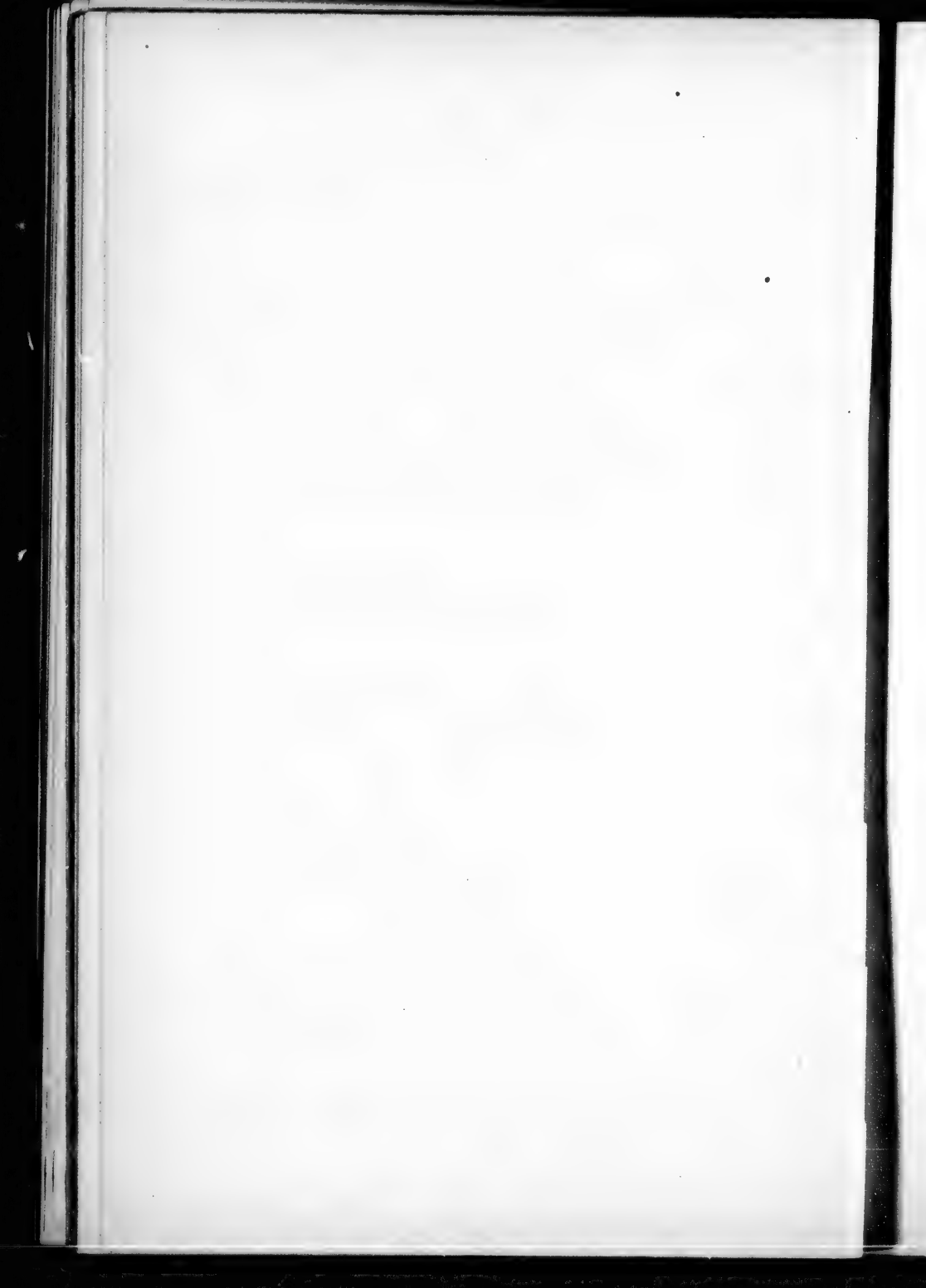
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Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath. 375

The lonesome spirit from the south-pole carries on the ships as far as the line, in obedience to the angelic troop but still requireth vengeance. Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid ; and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune, 380
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean ;
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion— 385
Backwards and forwards half her length,
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound :
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-demon, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong ; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit who returneth southward. How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare ;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned 395
Two voices in the air.
“ Is it he ? ” quoth one, “ is this the man ?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low,
The harmless Albatross. 400

“ The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.”

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew : 405
Quoth he, “ The man hath penance done
And penance more will do.”

PART THE SIXTH.

First Voice.

" But tell me, tell me ! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast ?
What is the ocean doing ?" 410

Second Voice.

" Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast ;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast— 415

" If he may know which way to go
For she guides him smooth or grim,
See, brother, see ! how graciously
She looketh down on him." 420

First Voice.

The Mariner
hath been cast
into a trance ;
for the angelic
power causeth
the vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

" But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind ?"

Second Voice.

" The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly ! more high, more high !
Or we shall be belated :
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated." 425

The super-
natural motion
is retarded ;
the Mariner
awakes, and
his penance
begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather : 430
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high ;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter :
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter. 435

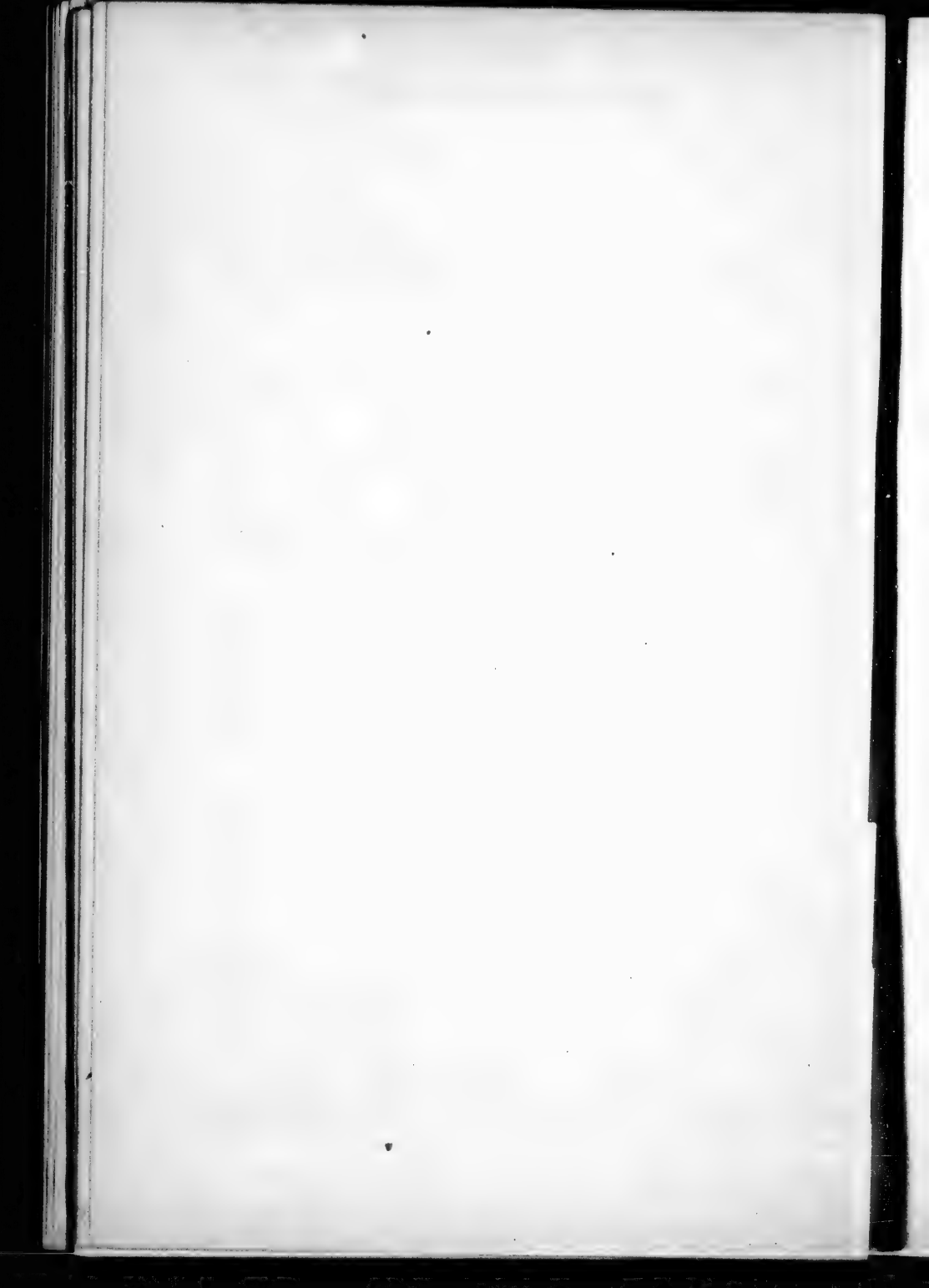
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The pang, the curse, with which they died,
 Had never passed away :
 I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
 Nor turn them up to pray. 440

The curse is
 finally
 expiated, And now this spell was snapt : once more
 I viewed the ocean green,
 And looked far forth, yet little saw
 Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road 445
 Doth walk in fear and dread,
 And having once turned round, walks on
 And turns no more his head ;
 Because he knows, a fearful fiend
 Doth close behind him tread. 450

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
 Nor sound nor motion made :
 Its path was not upon the sea,
 In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek 455
 Like a meadow-gale of spring—
 It mingled strangely with my fears,
 Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
 Yet she sailed softly too : 460
 Sweely, sweetly blew the breeze—
 On me alone it blew.

The Ancient
 Mariner
 beholdeth his
 native
 country. Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed
 The lighthouse top I see ?
 Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ? 465
 Is this mine own countree ?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
 And I with sobs did pray—
 O let me be awake, my God !
 O let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
 So smoothly it was strewn ;
 And on the bay the moonlight lay,
 And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less, 475
 That stands above the rock ;
 The moonlight steeped in silentness
 The steady weathercock.

The angelic
 spirits leave
 the dead
 bodies. And the bay was white with silent light,
 Till rising from the same, 480
 Full many shapes, that shadows were,
 In crimson colours came.

And appear
 in their own
 forms of light. A little distance from the prow
 Those crimson shadows were :
 I turned my eye upon the deck— 485
 Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
 And, by the holy rood !
 A man all light, a seraph-man,
 On every corse there stood. 490

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
 It was a heavenly sight !
 They stood as signals to the land,
 Each one a lovely light :

This seraph-band, each waved his hand, 495
 No voice did they impart—
 No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank
 Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
 I heard the Pilot's cheer ; 500
 My head was turned perforce away,
 And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot, and the Pilot's boy,
 I heard them coming fast :

475

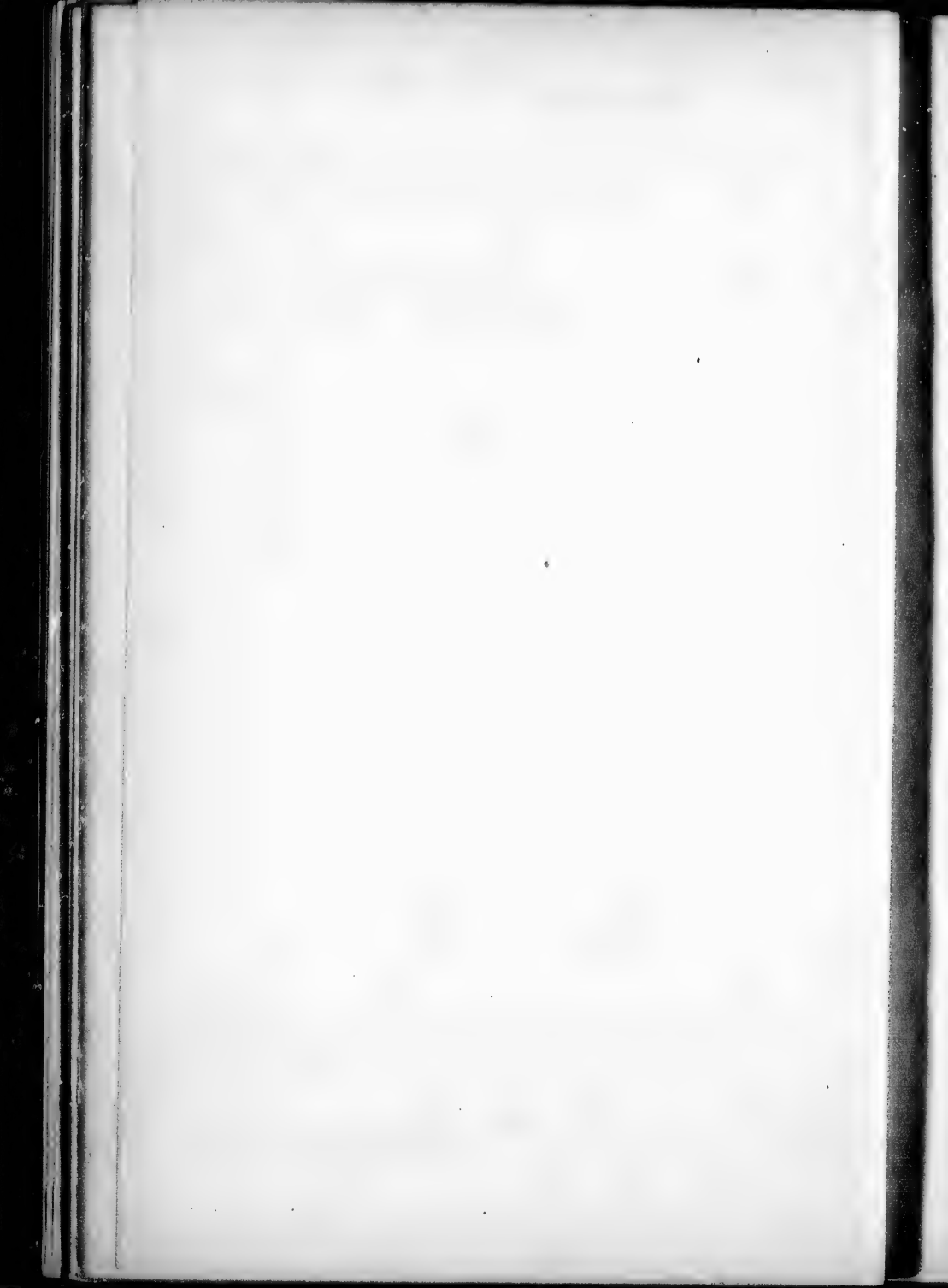
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Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy
The dead men could not blist. 505

I saw a third—I heard his voice ;
It is the Hermit good !
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood. 510
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART THE SEVENTH.

The Hermit
of the Wood. This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears ! 515
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump :
It is the moss that wholly hides 520
The rotted old oak stump.

The skiff-boat neared ; I heard them talk,
“Why, this is strange, I trow
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now ?” 525

Approacheth
the ship with
wonder. “Strange, by my faith !” the Hermit said—
“And they answered not our cheer !
The planks looked warped ! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere !
I never saw aught like to them, 530
Unless perchance it were

“Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along ;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.” 535

"Dear Lord it hath a fiendish look"—
 (The Pilot made reply)
 "I am a feared"—"Push on, push on!"
 Said the Hermit cheerily.

540

The boat came closer to the ship,
 But I nor spake nor stirred;
 The boat came close beneath the ship,
 And straight a sound was heard.

The ship
 suddenly
 sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
 Still louder and more dread:
 It reached the ship, it split the bay;
 The ship went down like lead.

545

The ancient
 Mariner is
 saved in the
 Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
 Which sky and ocean smote, 550
 Like one that hath been seven days drowned,
 My body lay afloat;
 But swift as dreams, myself I found
 Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
 The boat spun round and round;
 And all was still, save that the hill
 Was telling of the sound.

555

I moved my lips, the Pilot shrieked
 And fell down in a fit;
 The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
 And prayed where he did sit.

560

I took the oars; the Pilot's boy,
 Who now doth crazy go,
 Laughed loud and long, and all the while 565
 His eyes went to and fro.
 "Ha! ha!" quoth he, "full plain I see,
 The Devil knows how to row."

And now, all in my own countree,
 I stood on the firm land!
 The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
 And scarcely he could stand.

570

540

545

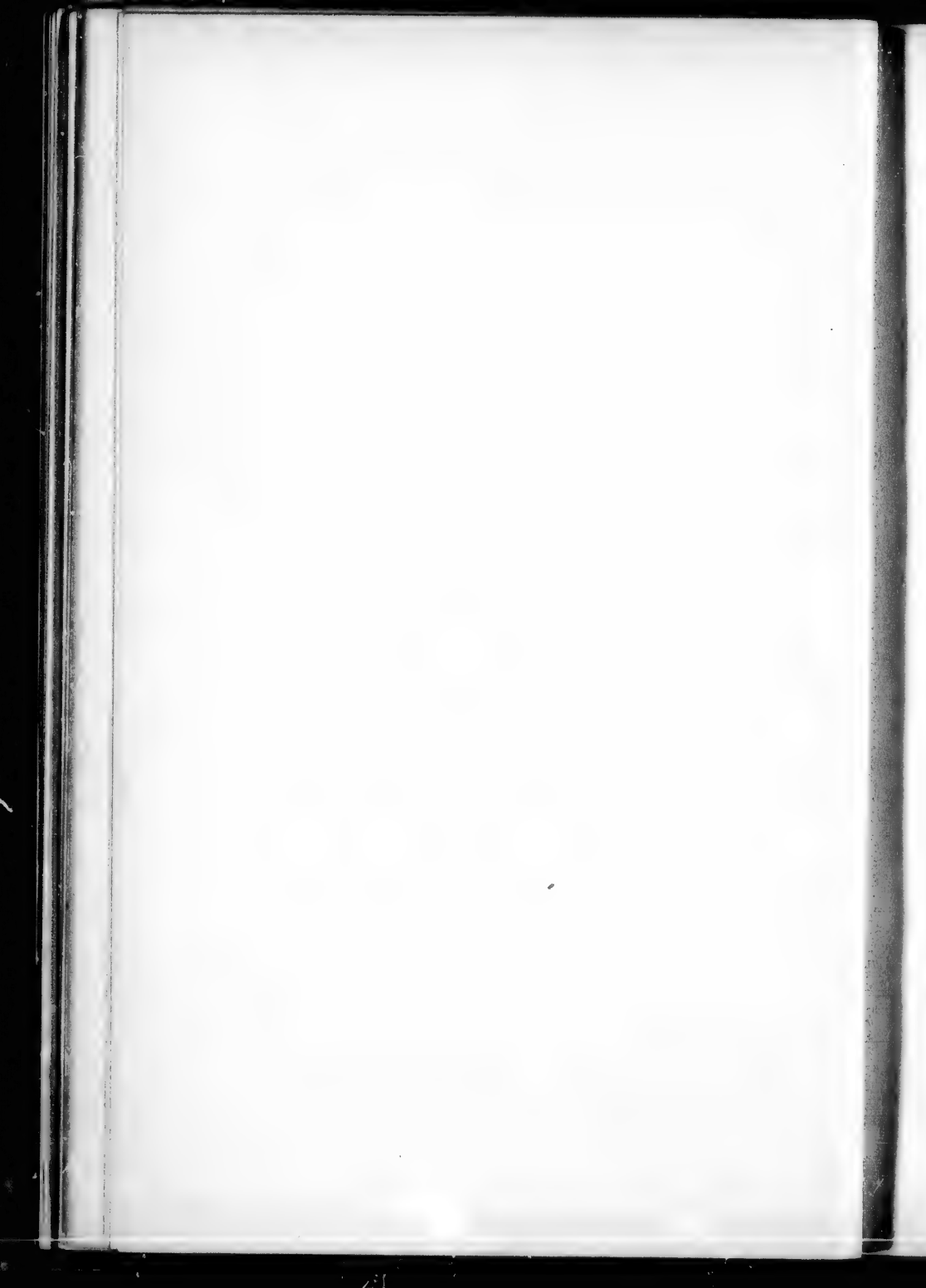
sound,
550
drowned,

555

560

565

570



The ancient
Mariner
earnestly
entreats
the Hermit
to shrieve
him; and
the
penance
of life
falls on
him.

"O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!"

The Hermit crossed his brow,

"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say— 575

What manner of man art thou?"

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched

With a woful agony,

Which forced me to begin my tale

And then it left me free. 580

And ever and
anon through-
out his future
life and agony
construeth
him to travel
from land to
land.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,

That agony returns;

And till my ghastly tale is told,

This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;

585

I have strange power of speech;

That moment that his face I see,

I know the man that must hear me:

To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!

590

The wedding-guests are there;

But in the garden-bower the bride

And bride-maids singing are;

And hark the little vesper bell,

Which biddeth me to prayer!

595

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been

Alone on a wide wide sea:

So lonely 'twas, that God himself

Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,

600

'Tis sweeter far to me,

To walk together to the kirk

With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,

605

And all together pray,

While each to his great Father bends,

Old men, and babes, and loving friends,

And youths and maidens gay!

And to teach
by his own
example, love
and reverence
to all things
that God
made and
loveth.

Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !
He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

610

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small ;
For the dear God who loveth us
He made and loveth all.

615

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone ; and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

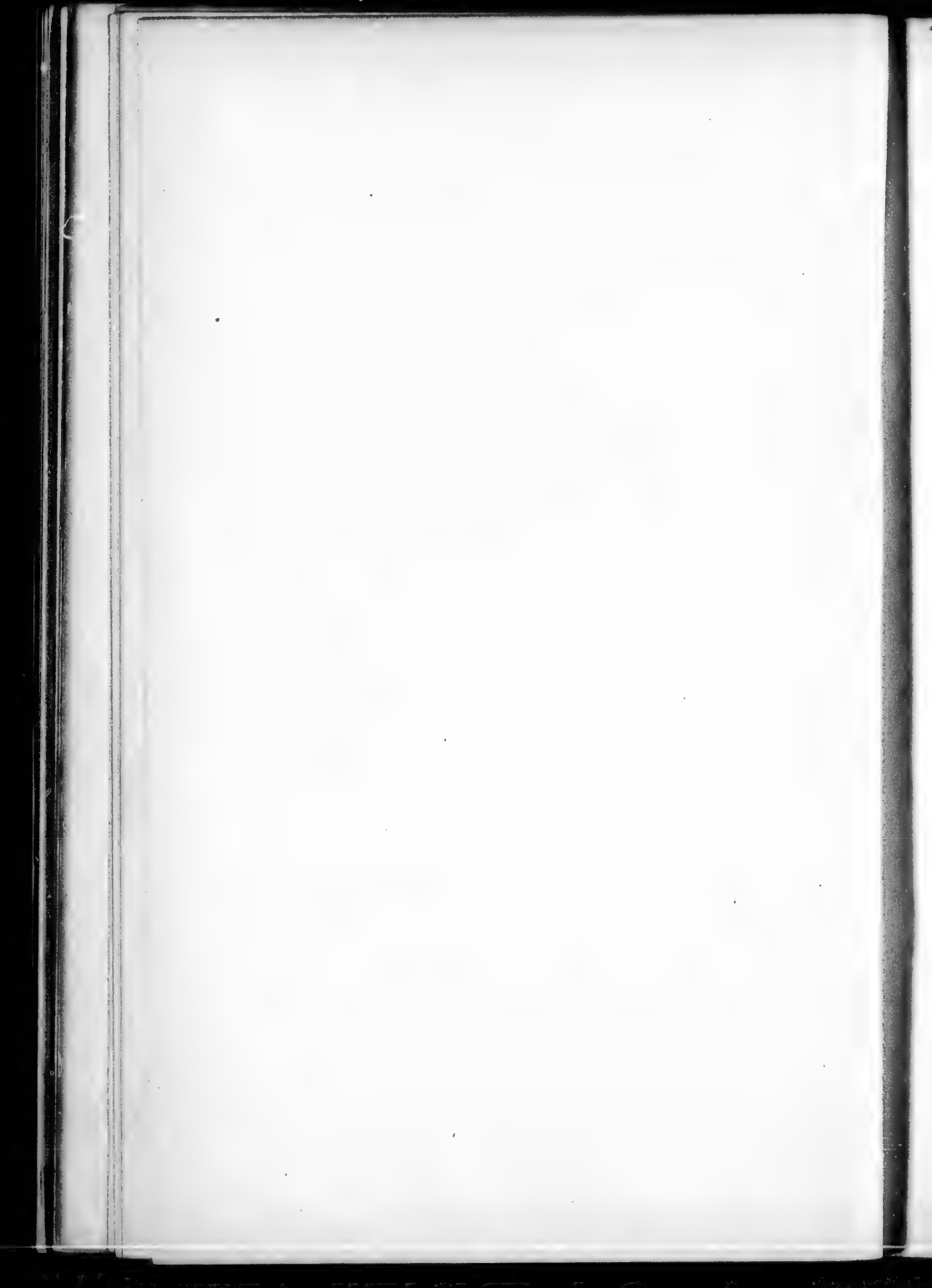
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He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn :
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

3.
610

615

620



NOTES.

Rime, from O. E. *rim*, number, and quite unconnected with "rhythm." Hence the spelling *rhyme* disguises the etymology of the word.

2—*One of three*. In Part VII. the Mariner says :—

"The moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me."

3—"By—eye." What ellipsis? It is briefer and livelier to make the Wedding-Guest thus refer to the striking features in the Mariner's appearance than for the poet formally to describe them. (Compare line 80 of this Part). Liveliness is gained, too, by the abrupt opening, "It is . . . Mariner."

7—Should "is set" and "are met" be parsed alike?

10—*Quoth*, preterite of *cweth-an*, to speak, now used only in the compound *bequeath*.

11—*Loon*, a base fellow. The first edition gives the passage thus :—

" 'There was a ship,' quoth he ;
'Nay, if thou'st got a laughsome tale,
Marinere ! come with me.'
He holds him with his skinny hand ;
Quoth he, 'There was a ship ;'—
'Now get thee hence, thou gray-beard Loon !
Or my staff shall make thee skip.'"

11—*Eftsoons*, properly "soon thereafter," the *eft* being the same word as *aft** (O. E. *æft*).

13—*His glittering eye*. This striking incident awakes our curiosity for what is to follow. The next couplet, written by Wordsworth, aptly expresses the height of interest and obedience.

21—Cheered. By whom?

23—*Kirk*. Though now only a Scottish and Northern form, *kirk* was once the proper word ; thus in "Piers Plowman" we read :—"The King and his knihtes to the kirk went." Coleridge uses a few archaic expressions, *e. g.*, "*eftsoons*" above, in order to give an antique flavour to his style. In the first edition, this was quite overdone.

25—*The sun*. This marks the loneliness and monotony of the voyage.

35—*Nodding*. The "Dark Ladie" says of her intended bridal procession :—

"But first the nodding minstrels go
With music meet for lordly bowers."

* The meaning of *soon* seems to have in time attached itself to the *eft*. whence Dogberry's "*effest way*."

Hales points out that Coleridge is correct in using "minstrels" for "musicians," not, like Scott, for "poets."

46—*As who.* *Who* is here an indefinite pronoun equivalent to *one*. So in Shakspeare's "As who should say," *i. e.*, "As one would say."

47—*Treads the shadow.* Runs on ground overshadowed by his foe; *i. e.*, is hotly pursued. This well expresses the sailors' fear and desperate efforts. *Still*, constantly. Note what life is thrown into the description by the personification, and by the comparison of the ship to the fugitive. This was not found in the first edition.

51-62—A short but powerful description of a sea full of icebergs. Note the touch of color in l. 54, and the imitative melody ("onomatopœia") in l. 61.

56—*Sheen*, brightness, akin to *shine*.

57—*Ken*, discern.

62—*Swound*, formed from *swoon* by adding *d*; Cf. *sound* from *Fr. son*, and the vulgar "sudden-t." Strange noises are heard by some people when fainting.

63—*Albatross*, a corruption of Portuguese *alcatraz*, in which *al*—is perhaps an article, as in *al-gebra*, *al-cohol*. The wandering albatross (*Diomedea exulans*), allied to the petrels, but "rivaling the condor in size and strength of wing," is an Antarctic bird abounding in the region of storms, near the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn. The introduction of the albatross was suggested by Wordsworth, who had just read in Shelvocke's *Voyages* that near Cape Horn albatrosses are often seen, some extending their wings ten or fifteen feet.*

66—*We hailed it in God's name.* Which makes the Mariner's conduct the more impious.

67—*Food, i. e.*, such as, &c. The original reading was:—

"The marineres gave it biscuit worms."

The omission of such graphic details, if at all homely, characterizes the "graceful" style, as described in Abbott's "English Lessons."

69-70—The ignorant sailors attribute their deliverance to the bird, which also adds to the Mariner's guilt and to their own.

71—"Wind" in poetry must be pronounced so as to rhyme with "behind."

74—*Hoilo.* This accentuation accounts for the vulgar "holler."

* How flimsy is De Quincy's charge of p'garism against Coleridge, based on this mention of the albatross without acknowledgment of indebtedness to Shelvocke, an author whom Wordsworth thought Coleridge had never read.

75—*Shroud*, rope ladders supporting the masts. Its tameness and long continuance are mentioned as aggravating the crime.

76—*Vespers*; here in its primitive sense of "evenings."

77—*Whiles*. Genitive of while, time. Another archaism.

79—*Save*. "Subjunctive of wish." The hearer's horrified exclamation pictures to us, better than a long description could, the Mariner's agony.

80—*Fiends*, lit. haters, enemies (Cf. "our ghostly enemy"), originally a participle of O. E. *fēon*, to hate.

PART II.

83—In what direction were they now sailing?

88—*Sweet*. A natural epithet in the mouth of a sailor, especially when conscience-stricken for having killed one.

97—*Like God's own head*. Supply *but*. The seeming irreverence of this comparison arises from the ignorant simplicity of the Mariner.

98—*Uprist*, a weak preterite for uprose. As many of our weak verbs were once strong, there must have been a time when strong and weak forms were in use together, as is now the case with awake, thrive, &c. In most instances the weak form prevailed; but in a few it did not, as it were, take root, which is the case with "uprist," as with "understanded."

102—*That*. Equivalent to "for they." By thus approving the Mariner's crime, the crew make themselves partners of his guilt and punishment.

103-6—This stanza contains two sources of "musical delight" which cannot be kept up throughout a whole poem, viz., internal rhyme (blew, flew; first, burst), and alliteration (breeze blew, foam flew, furrow off free). Most editions keep the earlier reading, "The furrow followed free." (See the footnote.) The change illustrates the poet's fidelity to nature.

107—*Sails dropt down*. Hung slack instead of bellying out with the wind. Observe how simple the language is, and yet how full of meaning, especially in lines 109-10.

111—*Copper*. A vivid epithet whose correctness is confirmed by those who have been becalmed in the "Doldrums."

117—*Painted*, in a picture.

119—*Water everywhere*. This aggravated their distress, as did the shrinking of the ship's planks through the drought and heat.

123—In the Middle Ages, even pious people (for instance Langland in "Piers Plowman") were given to uttering sacred names with a freedom that to us seems like downright profanity. The Mariner's feelings, too, are harrowed up by recalling the rightful scene.

125—*With legs.* This seemed unnatural and as if the order of the universe were disturbed.

128—*Death-fires.* Luminous appearances, vulgarly called "corpse candles." They are generally caused by the combustion of gases evolved from decaying organic matter. Here they must have been of electric origin, but resembling those seen on land.

132—*The spirit.* We afterwards learn that it was

"The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow."

138—*Choked with soot.* This homely phrase, as well as the double negative in the preceding line, is in keeping with the Mariner's station in life. Is *soot* a perfect rhyme for *root*?

139—*Well-to-do*, a corruption of wellaway, which is itself a corruption of O. E. *wá lá wá, woe! lo! woe!*

141—*Instead of the cross.* The substitution of the murdered bird for the emblem of redemption showed that his shipmates deemed his crime unpardonable, and laid the whole blame on him.

PART III.

145—*A weary time!* This emphatic repetition (Epizeuxis) is particularly appropriate here. Why? *Weary* is connected not with *wear*, but with O. E. *worian*, to wander; so that it means "as one feels after wandering."

152—*Wist*, properly "knew," here rather "perceived." It is the past of *wot*, O. E. *wát*, pret. *wiste*, inf. *wit-an*, to wit.

155—*Dodged*, "were dodging." This is not necessarily an undignified word; thus Milton says, "some dodging casuist." It is probably akin to *dodder*, not to *dog*.

156—*Veer*, to swerve, lit. to go in a circle (Fr. *vir-er*, Lat. *viria*, a large ring), implies more sudden turns than "tack," as a vessel may sail for a long distance on one tack.

164—*Gramercy.* Great thanks (Fr. *grand merci*). *Grin.* "I took the thought of grinning for joy . . . from poor Burnett's remark to me when we had climbed to the top of Plinlimmon, and were nearly dead with thirst. We could not speak from the constriction, till we found a little puddle under a stone. He said to me, 'You grinned like an idiot!' He had done the same."—*Coleridge.* The student should point out the various graphic touches in this and the next stanza.

165—The "flash of joy" only heightens the horror that follows.

168—*Hither.* Supply "nor comes." Her "steadying with upright keel," as well as her moving in a calm, shews her to be no human ship, as vessels in a calm roll so that if two fell foul of each other, they might grind each other to the water's edge.

177—The skeleton ship was suggested by a dream of a Mr. C.ruikshank's, a friend of Coleridge's.

184—*Gossameres*. Webs of the gossamer spider which float on the air. Note how dramatically all the circumstances are introduced by way of speaking, not of narrating.

185—In the first edition these lines occur:—

"Are these *her* naked ribs, which flecked
The sun that did behind them peer?
And are these two ill, all her crew,
That woman and her fleshless Pheere?"

His bones were black with many a crack,
All black and bare I ween;
Jet black and bare, save where with rust
Of my ouldy damps and charnel crust
They're patch'd with purple and green.

* * * * *
A gust of wind sterte up behind,
And whistled thro' his bones,
Thro' the ho'es of his eyes, and the hole of his mouth
Half whistles and half groans.

Their omission shews the ripened taste of the poet.

196—For explanation see the author's marginal note.

200—"At one stride" well expresses the sudden closing in of night within the tropics, where there is no twilight.

203—*Sideways*. Fearful of seeing again these terrible beings. The ghastly suspense, produced by the figure in "Fear . . . sip," and the various particulars in the description, is prolonged by the unusual length and peculiar structure of the stanza.

209—*The eastern bar*, the horizon. *One bright star*. The poet is true to nature in making so minute a particular print itself on the Mariner's horror-stricken brain.

212—*Star-dogged*. Contrast this epithet with lines 263-6 and the marginal note thereon. The difference arises from our natural and involuntary habit of conceiving our emotions to be reflected in the varying aspects of nature. Compare *Dejection*, l. 47-9.

221—*Bliss or woe*. So that death is not regarded as in itself a punishment. This is an answer to the objection that the innocent crew are punished, while the guilty Mariner escapes, which is far from the poet's conception.

223—*Like the whizz of my cross-bow*. Thus reminding him of his crime.

PART IV.

226-7—This couplet, Coleridge says, was written by Wordsworth. *Ribb'd*, marked with ridges thrown up by the successive waves.

232—Why is *alone* repeated so often?

240—Observe the various terrors of his penance—loneliness, self-loathing (he ranks himself with the "slimy things"), horrors wherever he looked, torture when he closed his eyes. inability to pray.

245—*Or ever*. *Or* is not the alternative *or* (O. E. *other*), but a doublet of *ere*, both coming from O. E. *ær*, whence *early* and *erst*. What forcible expression in this stanza? What figure in *gush't*?

254—*Reek*, smell; literally smoke.

263.—This is the turning point of the story. The beauty of creation overcomes his evil disposition, and a spirit of love for all God's creatures enters his soul.

273—*Water-snakes*. "Captain Kingman, in lat. 8° 46' S., long. 105° 30' E., passed through a tract of water, . . . so full of minute (and some not very minute) animal organisms, as to present the aspect at night of a boundless plain covered with snow. Some of these animals were 'serpents' of six inches in length, of transparent gelatinous consistency and very luminous.

"The Phosphorescence of the Ocean . . . strikes all who witness it with wonder and admiration. It proceeds from a great variety of marine organisms. . . . They mostly shine when excited by a blow, or by agitation of the water. . . . or in the wake of a ship. In the latter case are often seen what appear to be large lumps of light rising from under the keel."—*Herschel's Physical Geography*, 31 and 32.

275—*Elf*. Like that of fairyland, "elf" being the pure English for "fairy."

284—*Spring*. Shew that this metaphor is here the most natural mode of expression.

286—*My kind saint*. His patron after whom he was named.

PART V.

297—*Silly* must be taken in the sense "useless," rather a perversion of the older meaning "simple," which is itself a degradation of the original meaning "blessed."

302—*Dank*, moist, damp; probably is not connected with the latter word, but with Icelandic *dög*, dew.

306—*Almost* modifies thought.

312—*Sere*, otherwise spelled, *sear*, dry withered.

314—*Sheen*, bright, fair, was originally, as here, an adjective. The ballad of "Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne" begins, "When shaws be sheene," *i. e.*, when woods are shining. *Wan*, pale; *i. e.*, in comparison with the fires.

325—*Jag*, a break. The comparison of lightning to a cata-ract well pictures the wonderful display of electricity witnessed in tropical storms; not flashes, but continuous sheets of flame.

333—*Had been*; would have been.

335—This striking incident, which was suggested by Wordsworth, might be objected to as burdening the story with needless supernatural interference. We may, however, consider that we receive ample amends in the weird picture contained in lines 313-26, and in the beautiful description in lines 357-371.

344—*Said nought to me.* For it was only the body (see 347) of his nephew. In the first edition these forcible lines follow :—

"And I quak'd to think of my owa voice
How frightful it would be."

358—The first edition had "lavrock," which Coleridge has changed to the modern "skylark," wisely thinking that the poem needs no more than an occasional archaic form.

361—*Furgoning*, confused and mingled notes.

394—*Living life.* Corporeal life. Here begins a dialogue between two spirits representing Justice and Mercy.

406—*Honey-dew*, a sweet substance found in drops like *dew* on trees and other plants.

PART VI.

416-7—The well-known fact that the moon's influence upon the ocean is here skillfully turned to account. We see now why the "star-dogged moon" shines upon the death scene in Part III. Compare line 431.

418—*Smooth or grim* ; adjectives used by *prolepsis* (anticipation) as predicates of *him*.

434—*Charnel.* A charnel house (L. carn-em, flesh) was one in which corpses were placed, or into which bones were removed from the churchyard when the bodies were decayed. *Filter* applies to *all*.

444. *Had*=would have. He was too full of vague terror (powerfully pictured in the succeeding stanza) to mark what presented itself to his eyes.

454—*Ripple or in shade.* It neither agitated nor cast a shade upon the sea. Even a "cat's-paw" darkens the water.

451—Note how the contrast with the scene of horror just past heightens the tender beauty with the succeeding stanzas. *It mingled strangely with my fears.* Perhaps because it was supernatural : "its path was not upon the sea."

466—*Countree.* The archaic accent may be justified as giving an antique tone to the language.

470-I—Observe the beauty and force of these lines, and also of :

"The moonlight steeped in silentness,
The steady weathercock."

"They silence sank
Like music on my heart."

476—In the first edition the corpses rose once more, and

"They lifted up their stiff right arms,
They held them strait and tight,
And each right arm burned like a torch,
A torch that's borne upright,
Their stony eye-balls glittered on
In the red and smoky light."

We cannot regret their omission, as they are too like a caricature of the scene in 433-5, and moreover are out of keeping with the prevailing tone of this part of the poem, which is one of peace and forgiveness.

488—*Rood* = cross. from O. E. *rôd* a gallows, originally a pole or *rod*.

489—*Seraph*. One of the highest order of angels, a singular formed from the Hebrew *serâphim*, literally "exalted ones."

493—*Signals*, i. e., for a pilot.

495—This is an impressive farewell sent from the bodies of his shipmates. We now leave the domain of the supernatural.

505—*Dear Lord*, an exclamation of thankfulness.

508—*Hermit*. A corruption of *eremite* (or *eremite*), a dweller in the wilderness (Gr. *eremos*).

511—*Shrive*, usually spelled *shrive*, to hear a confession (whence Shrove-Tuesday), probably through O. E. *scrifan* from Lat. *scribere*, to write, especially a law, hence to impose a penalty, whence the notion of imposing a penance might spring.

PART VII.

515—*Rears* = raises, the true English causative of *rise*, *raise* being Norse (Icel. *reisa*). For the change of *s* to *r* compare *where* with *was*.

522—*Skiff-boat*, a repetition, *skiff* being only a particular kind of boat.

523—*Trow*, think, literally consider *true*. *Trow* comes from *true*.

530-6—Why is the unkempt condition of the ship so dwelt upon?

534—*Tod*, a bush.

539—*A-feared*, literally "put in fear." Cf. "anear," 310.

546—*Still* = ever. i. e., increasingly loud.

559—What does the poet indicate by the different effects on occupants of the boat?

572—So overcome was even he by astonishment and horror. Coleridge is true to the great principle of leaving the reader to infer the appearance of the Mariner from its effects on those who met him.

578—*Agony* (Gr. *agonia*, a contest, wrestling, a struggle), marks the outward effects of pain. Hence its appropriateness here.

583—*Ghastly*, M. E. *gastly*, O. E. *gæstlic*, terrible—which is akin to Gothic *us-gaisjan*, to terrify—has no connection with *ghost*, from which perhaps its *h* crept in.

590—*Uproar*. This suggestive contrast of the boisterous revelry of the rude guests with the singing of the bride and her

maids, and the vesper bell's call to prayer naturally introduces the concluding reflections on the delightfulness of Divine service, and on the spirit of love to all God's creatures, "without which all our doings are nothing worth."

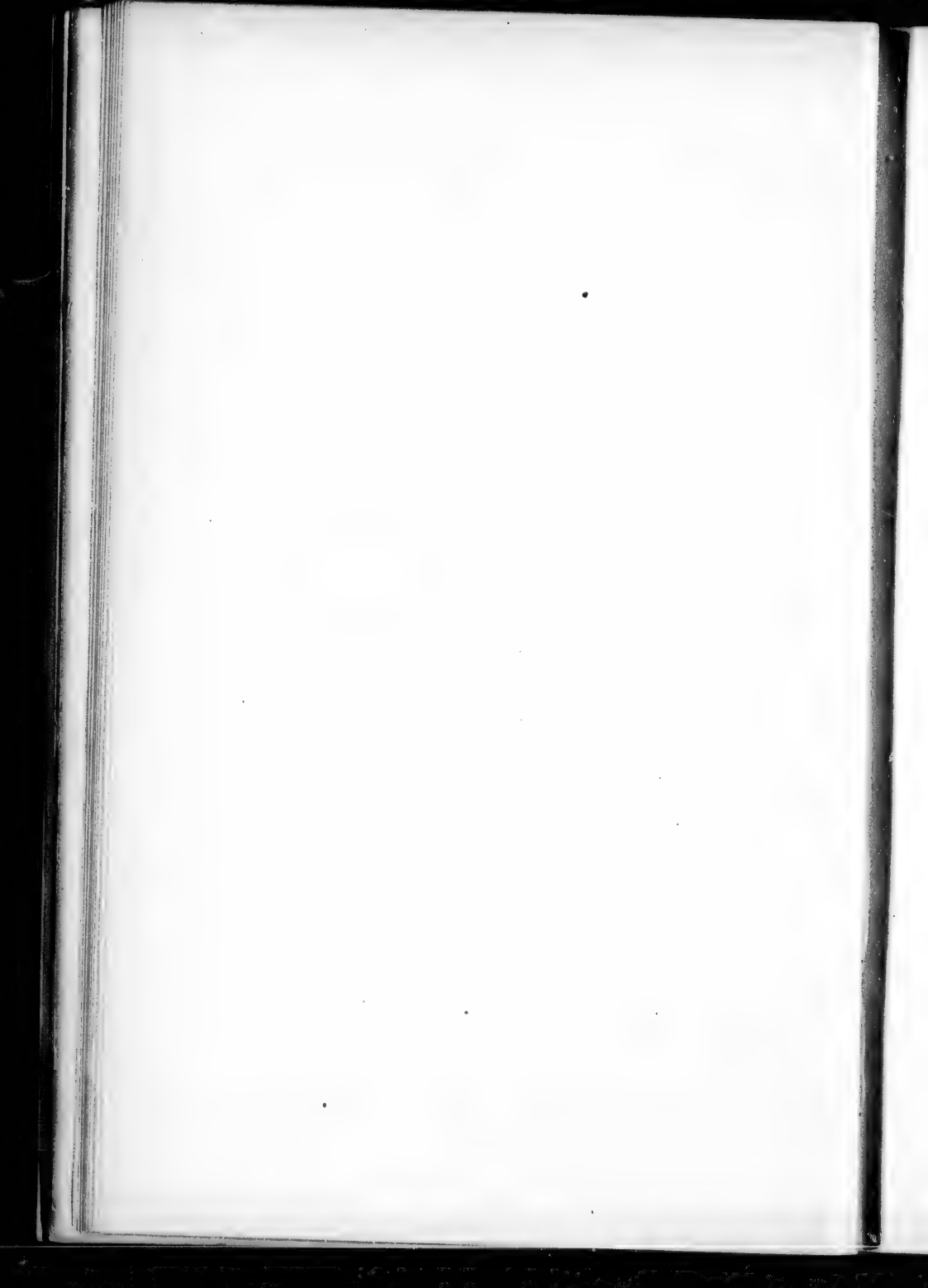
623—*Sadder*, more serious ; so, "Speak you this with a sad brow?" (Shak., *Ado* 1, 1).

It is interesting to read Coleridge's own opinion of the *Ancient Mariner* as found in his *Table Talk* :—"Mrs. Barbauld once told me that she admired the *Ancient Mariner* very much, but that there were two faults in it—it was improbable, and had no moral. As for the probability, I owned that it might admit some question ; but as to the want of a moral, I told her that in my own judgment the poem had too much ; and that the only, or chief fault, if I might say so, was the obtrusion of the moral sentiment so openly on the reader as a principle or cause of action in a work of such pure imagination."

The moral referred to is contained evidently in the last stanza but two. The student should be able to shew where else the moral has been "obtruded on the reader."

SELECT ODES
FROM
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

E.



ODES.

ODE TO THE DEPARTING YEAR.*

Ἰὸν, ἰὸν, ὦ ὦ κακά,
Υπ' αὐ με δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνοσ
Στροβιῖ, ταρασσὼν φροίμους ἐφημίους.

Τὸ μέλλον ἴζει. Καὶ σὺ μ' ἐν τᾷ χει παρὼν
Ἄγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτεῖρας ἔρεις.

Æschyl. Agam. 1214.

ARGUMENT.

The Ode commences with an address to the Divine Providence, that regulates into one vast harmony all the events of time, however calamitous some of them may appear to mortals. The second Strophe calls on men to suspend their private joys and sorrows, and devote them for a while to the cause of human nature in general. The first Epode speaks of the Empress of Russia, who died of an apoplexy on the 17th of November, 1796; having just concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Kings combined against France. The first and second Antistrophe describe the image of the Departing Year, &c., as in a vision. The second Epode prophesies, in anguish of spirit, the downfall of this country.

1.

Spirit who sweepst the wild harp of Time!

It is most hard, with an untroubled ear

Thy dark inwoven harmonies to hear!

Yet, mine eye fixed on Heaven's unchanging clime,

Long had I listened, free from mortal fear, 5

With inward stillness, and a bowed mind;

When lo! its folds far waving on the wind,

I saw the train of the departing Year!

Starting from my silent sadness,

Then with no unholy madness 10

Ere yet the entered cloud foreclosed my sight,

I raised the impetuous song, and solemnised his flight.

This Ode was composed on the 24th, 25th, and 26th days of December, 1796; and was first published on the last day of that year.

II.

Hither, from the recent tomb,
 From the prison's direr gloom,
 From distemper's midnight anguish ; 15
 And thence, where Poverty doth waste and languish !
 Or where, his two bright torches blending,
 Love illumines manhood's maze,
 Or where o'er cradled infants bending
 Hope has fixed her wishful gaze ; 20
 Hither, in perplexed dance,
 Ye Woes ! ye young-eyed Joys ! advance.

By Time's wild harp, and by the hand
 Whose indefatigable sweep
 Raises its fateful strings from sleep, 25
 I bid you haste, a mixed tumultuous band !
 From every private bower,
 And each domestic hearth,
 Haste for one solemn hour ;
 And with a loud and yet a louder voice, 30
 O'er Nature struggling in portentous birth,
 Weep and rejoice !
 Still echoes the dread name that o'er the earth
 Let slip the storm, and woke the brood of hell :
 And now advance in saintly jubilee 35
 Justice and Truth ! They too have heard thy spell !
 They too obey thy name, divinest Liberty !

III.

I marked Ambition in his war array !
 I heard the mailed Monarch's troublous cry : [40
 " Ah ! wherefore does the Northern Conqueress stay !
 Groans not her chariot on its onward way ?"
 Fly, mailed Monarch, fly !
 Stunned by Death's twice mortal mace,
 No more on murder's lurid face
 The insatiate hag shall gloat with drunken eye ! 45
 Manes of the unnumbered slain !
 Ye that gasped on Warsaw's plain !

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45

Ye that erst at Ismail's tower,
 When human ruin choked the streams,
 Fell in conquest's gluttoned hour, 50
 Mid women's shrieks and infants' screams !
 Spirits of the uncoffined slain,
 Sudden blasts of triumph swelling,
 Oft, at night, in misty train,
 Rush around her narrow dwelling ! 55
 The exterminating fiend is fled —
 (Foul her life, and dark her doom)
 Mighty armies of the dead
 Dance, like death-fires, round her tomb !
 Then with prophetic song relate, 60
 Each some tyrant-murderer's fate !

IV.

Departing Year ! 'twas on no earthly shore
 My soul beheld thy vision ! Where alone,
 Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,
 Aye Memory sits : thy robe inscribed with gore, 65
 With many an unimaginable groan
 Thou storiedst thy sad hours ! Silence ensued,
 Deep silence o'er the ethereal multitude,
 Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with glories
 shone.
 Then, his eye wild ardours glancing, 70
 From the choired gods advancing,
 The Spirit of the Earth made reverence meet,
 And stood up, beautiful, before the cloudy seat.

V.

Throughout the blissful throng,
 Hushed were harp and song : 75
 Till wheeling round the throne the Lampads seven,
 (The mystic words of Heaven)
 Permissive signal make :
 The fervent Spirit bowed, then spread his wings and
 spake !
 " Thou in stormy blackness throning 80
 Love and uncreated Light,
 By the Earth's unsolaced groaning,
 Seize thy terrors, Arm of might !

By peace with proffered insult scared,
 Masked hate and envying scorn ! 85
 By years of havoc yet unborn !
 And hunger's bosom to the frost-winds bared !
 But chief by Afric's wrongs,
 Strange, horrible, and foul !
 By what deep guilt belongs 90
 To the deaf Synod, 'full of gifts and lies !'
 By wealth's insensate laugh ! by torture's howl !
 Avenger, rise !
 For ever shall the thankless Island scowl,
 Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow ? 95
 Speak ! from thy storm-black Heaven O speak aloud !
 And on the darkling foe
 Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain cloud !
 O dart the flash ! O rise and deal the blow !
 The Past to thee, to thee the Future cries ! 100
 Hark ! how wide Nature joins her groans below !
 Rise, God of Nature ! rise."

VI.

The voice had ceased, the vision fled ;
 Yet still I gasped and reeled with dread.
 And ever, when the dream of night 105
 Renews the phantom to my sight,
 Cold sweat-drops gather on my limbs ;
 My ears throb hot ; my eye-balls start ;
 My brain with horrid tumult swims ;
 Wild is the tempest of my heart ; 110
 And my thick and struggling breath
 Imitates the toil of death !
 No stranger agony confounds
 The soldier on the war-field spread,
 When all foredone with toil and wounds, 115
 Death-like he dozes among heaps of dead !
 (The strife is o'er, the daylight fled,
 And the night-wind clamours hoarse !
 See ! the starting wretch's head
 Lies pillowed on a brother's corse !) 120

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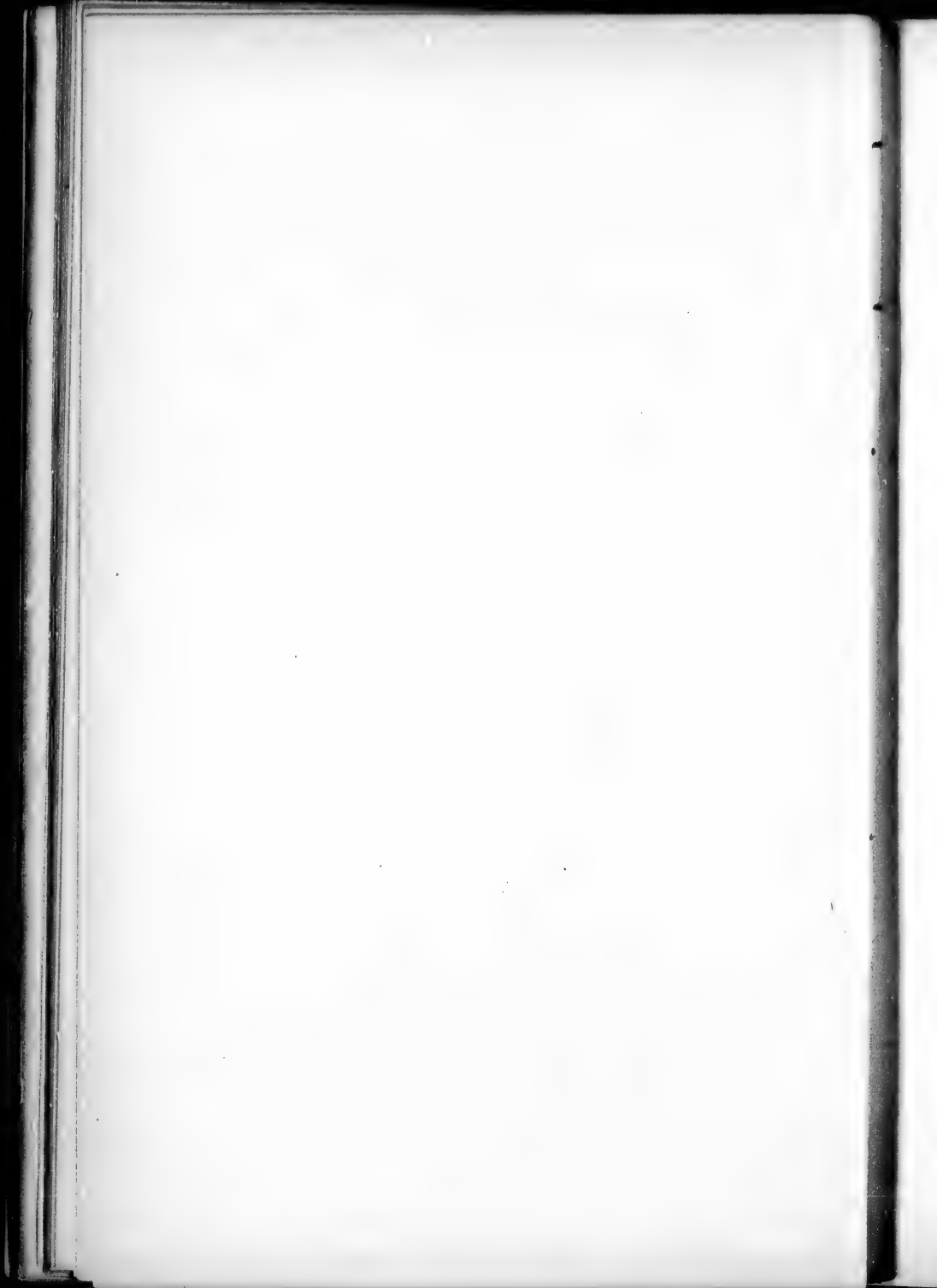
100
ow !

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120



VII.

Not yet enslaved, not wholly vile,
 O Albion ! O my mother Isle !
 Thy valleys, fair as Eden's bowers,
 Glitter green with sunny showers ;
 Thy grassy uplands' gentle swells 125
 Echo to the bleat of flocks ;
 (Those grassy hills, those glittering dells
 Proudly ramparted with rocks)
 And Ocean mid his uproar wild
 Speaks safety to his island-child. 130
 Hence for many a fearless age
 Has social Quiet loved thy shore ;
 Nor ever proud invader's rage
 Or sacked thy towers, or stained thy fields with gore.

VIII.

Abandoned of Heaven, mad avarice thy guide, 135
 At cowardly distance, yet kindling with pride—
 Mid thy herds and thy corn-fields secure thou hast
 stood,
 And joined the wild yelling of famine and blood !
 The nations curse thee ! They with eager wondering
 Shall hear Destruction, like a vulture, scream ! 140
 Strange-eyed Destruction ! who with many a dream
 Of central fires through nether seas upthundering
 Soothes her fierce solitude ; yet as she lies
 By livid fount, or red volcanic stream,
 If ever to her lidless dragon-eyes, 145
 O Albion ! thy predestined ruins rise,
 The fiend-hag on her perilous couch doth leap,
 Muttering distempered triumph in her charmed sleep.

IX.

 Away, my soul, away !
 In vain, in vain the birds of warning sing— 150
 And hark ! I hear the famished brood of prey
 Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind !
 Away, my soul, away !
 I unpartaking of the evil thing,
 With daily prayer and daily toil 155
 Soliciting for food my scanty soil,

Have wailed my country with a loud Lament.
Now I recentre my immortal mind

In the deep sabbath of meek self-content ;
Cleansed from the vaporous passions that bedim 160
God's Image, sister of the Seraphim.

FRANCE.—AN ODE.

I.

Ye Clouds ! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may control !
Ye Ocean Waves ! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws !
Ye Woods ! that listen to the night-birds singing. 5
Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging,
Have made a solemn music of the wind !
Where, like a man beloved of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod, 10
How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound !
O ye loud Waves ! and O ye Forests high ! 15
And O ye Clouds that far above me soared !
Thou rising Sun ! thou blue rejoicing Sky !
Yea, every thing that is and will be free !
Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be.
With what deep worship I have still adored 20
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II.

When France in wrath her giant limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth and sea,
Stamped her strong foot and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared ! 25
With what a joy my lofty gratulation
Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band :
And when to overwhelm the disenchanted nation,

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free,
25

Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,
 The Monarchs marched in evil day, 30
 And Britain joined the dire array;
 Though dear her shores and circling ocean,
 Though many friendships, many youthful loves
 Had swol'n the patriot emotion [35
 And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and groves;
 Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
 To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,
 And shame too long delayed and vain retreat!
 For ne'er, O Liberty, with partial aim
 I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame; 40
 But blessed the pæans of delivered France,
 And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

III.

"And what," I said, "though Blasphemy's loud scream
 With that sweet music of deliverance strove! [45
 Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove
 A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream!
 Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
 The Sun was rising, though ye hid his light!"
 And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and
 trembled,
 The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm and
 bright; 50
 When France her front deep-scarr'd and gory
 Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory;
 When, insupportably advancing,
 Her arm made mockery of the warrior's tramp;
 While timid looks of fury glancing, 55
 Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal stamp,
 Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore;
 Then I reproached my fears that would not flee,
 "And soon," I said, "shall Wisdom teach her lore
 In the low huts of them that toil and groan! 60
 And, conquering by her happiness alone,
 Shall France compel the nations to be free,
 Till Love and Joy look round, and call the Earth
 their own."

IV.

Forgive me, Freedom ! O forgive those dreams !
 I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament, 65
 From bleak Helvetia's icy cavern sent—
 I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained streams !
 Heroes, that for your peaceful country perished,
 And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain snows [70
 With bleeding wounds ; forgive me, that I cherished
 One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes !
 To scatter rage, and traitorous guilt,
 Where peace her jealous home had built ;
 A patriot race to disinherit
 Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear ; 75
 And with inexorable spirit
 To taint the bloodless freedom of the mountaineer—
 O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
 And patriot only in pernicious toils,
 Are these thy boasts, Champion of human kind ? 80
 To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
 Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey ;
 To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
 From freemen torn ; to tempt and to betray ?

V.

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain, 85
 Slaves by their own compulsion ! In mad game
 They burst their manacles and wear the name
 Of freedom, graven on a heavier chain !
 O Liberty ! with profitless endeavour
 Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour ; 90
 But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor ever
 Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
 Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,
 (Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee)
 Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions, 95
 And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
 Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
 The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of the
 waves !
 And there I felt thee !—on that sea-cliff's verge [100
 Whose pines, scarce travelled by the breeze above,

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Had made one murmur with the distant surge!
 Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
 And shot my being through earth, sea and air,
 Possessing all things with intensest love,
 O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there. 105

FEBRUARY, 1798.

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

(Composed on the night after his recitation of a Poem on the Growth of an Individual Mind.)

Friend of the wise! and teacher of the good!
 Into my heart have I received that lay
 More than historic, that prophetic lay
 Wherein (high theme by thee first sung aright)
 Of the foundations and the building up 5
 Of a Human Spirit thou hast dared to tell
 What may be told, to the understanding mind
 Revealable; and what within the mind
 By vital breathings secret as the soul
 Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the heart 10
 Thoughts all too deep for words!—

Theme hard as high

Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious fears,
 (The first-born they of Reason and twin-birth)
 Of tides obedient to external force, 15
 And currents self-determined, as might seem,
 Or by some inner power; of moments awful,
 Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,
 When power streamed from thee, and thy soul received
 The light reflected, as a light bestowed— 20
 Of fancies fair, and milder hours of youth,
 Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought
 Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens
 Native our outland, lakes and famous hills!
 Or on the lonely high-road, when the stars 25
 Were rising; or by secret mountain streams,
 The guides and the companions of thy way!

Of more than Fancy, of the Social Sense
 Distending wide, and man beloved as man,
 Where France in all her towns lay vibrating 30
 Like some becalmed bark beneath the burst
 Of Heaven's immediate thunder, when no cloud
 Is visible, or shadow on the main.
 For thou wert there, thine own brows garlanded,
 Amid the tremor of a realm aglow, 35
 Amid a mighty nation jubilant,
 When from the general heart of human kind
 Hope sprang forth like a full-born Deity !
 —Of that dear Hope afflicted and struck down, [40
 So summoned homeward, thenceforth calm and sure
 From the dread watch-tower of man's absolute self.
 With light unwaning on her eyes, to look
 Far on—herself a glory to behold,
 The Angel of the vision ! Then (last strain)
 Of Duty, chosen laws controlling choice, 45
 Action and joy !—An Orphic song indeed,
 A song divine of high and passionate thoughts
 To their own music chanted !

O great Bard !
 Ere yet that last strain dying awed the air,
 With steadfast eye I viewed thee in the choir 50
 Of ever-enduring men. The truly great
 Have all one age, and from one visible space
 Shed influence ! They, both in power and act,
 Are permanent, and Time is not with them,
 Save as it worketh for them, they in it. 55
 Nor less a sacred roll, than those of old,
 And to be placed, as they, with gradual fame
 Among the archives of mankind, thy work
 Makes audible a linked lay of Truth,
 Of Truth profound a sweet continuous lay, 60
 Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes !
 Ah ! as I listened with a heart forlorn,
 The pulses of my being beat anew :
 And even as life returns upon the drowned,
 Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of pains— 65
 Keen pangs of Love, awakening as a babe
 Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart ;

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And fears self-willed, that shunned the eye of hope ;
 And hope that scarce would know itself from fear ;
 Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain, 70
 And genius given, and knowledge won in vain ;
 And all which I had culled in wood-walks wild,
 And all which patient toil had reared, and all
 Commune with thee had opened out—but flowers
 Strewed on my corse, and borne upon my bier, 75
 In the same coffin, for the self-same grave !

That way no more ! and ill beseems it me,
 Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,
 Singing of glory and futurity,
 To wander back on such unhealthful road, 80
 Plucking the poisons of self-harm ! And ill
 Such intertwine beseems triumphal wreaths
 Strewed before thy advancing !

Nor do thou,
 Sage bard ! impair the memory of that hour 85
 Of thy communion with my nobler mind
 By pity or grief, already felt too long !
 Nor let my words import more blame than needs.
 The tumult rose and ceased : for peace is nigh
 Where wisdom's voice has found a listening heart. 90
 Amid the howl of more than wintry storms,
 The halcyon hears the voice of vernal hours
 Already on the wing.

Eve following eve, [95
 Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of Home
 Is sweetest ! moments for their own sake hailed
 And more desired, more precious for thy song,
 In silence listening, like a devout child,
 My soul lay passive, by thy various strain
 Driven as in surges now beneath the stars, 100
 With momentary stars of my own birth,
 Fair constellated foam,* still darting off

* "A beautiful white cloud of foam at momentary intervals poured by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it ; and every now and then light detachments of this white cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small constellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight like a Tartar troop over a wilderness."—*The Friend*, p. 220.

Into the darkness ; now a tranquil sea,
 Outspread and bright, yet swelling to the moon.

And when—O Friend ! my comforter and guide !^{[105}
 Strong in thyself, and powerful to give strength !—
 Thy long-sustained Song finally closed,
 And thy deep voice had ceased—yet thou thyself
 Wert still before my eyes, and round us both
 That happy vision of beloved faces—¹¹⁰
 Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of its close
 I sate, my being blended in one thought
 (Thought was it ? or aspiration ? or resolve ?)
 Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the sound—
 And when I rose, I found myself in prayer.¹¹⁵

DEJECTION.—AN ODE.

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
 With the old Moon in her arms :
 And I fear, I fear, my Master dear !
 We shall have a deadly storm.

Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.

I.

Well ! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made
 The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
 This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
 Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
 Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes, 5
 Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
 Upon the strings of this Eolian lute,
 Which better far were mute.
 For lo ! the New-moon winter bright !
 And overspread with phantom light, ¹⁰
 (With swimming phantom light o'rspread
 But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
 I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
 The coming on of rain and squally blast.
 And oh ! that even now the gust were swelling, ¹⁵
 And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast !

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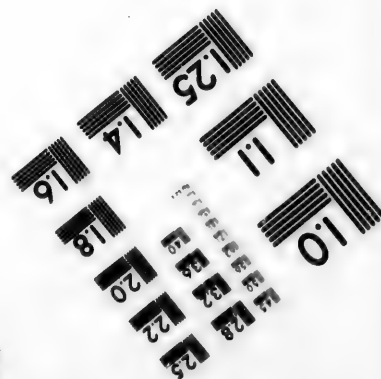
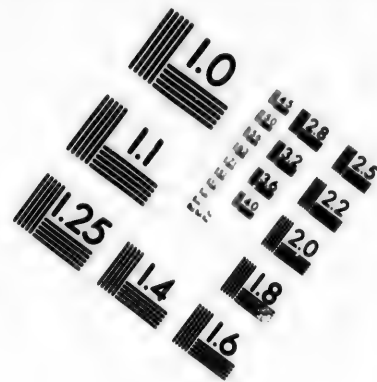
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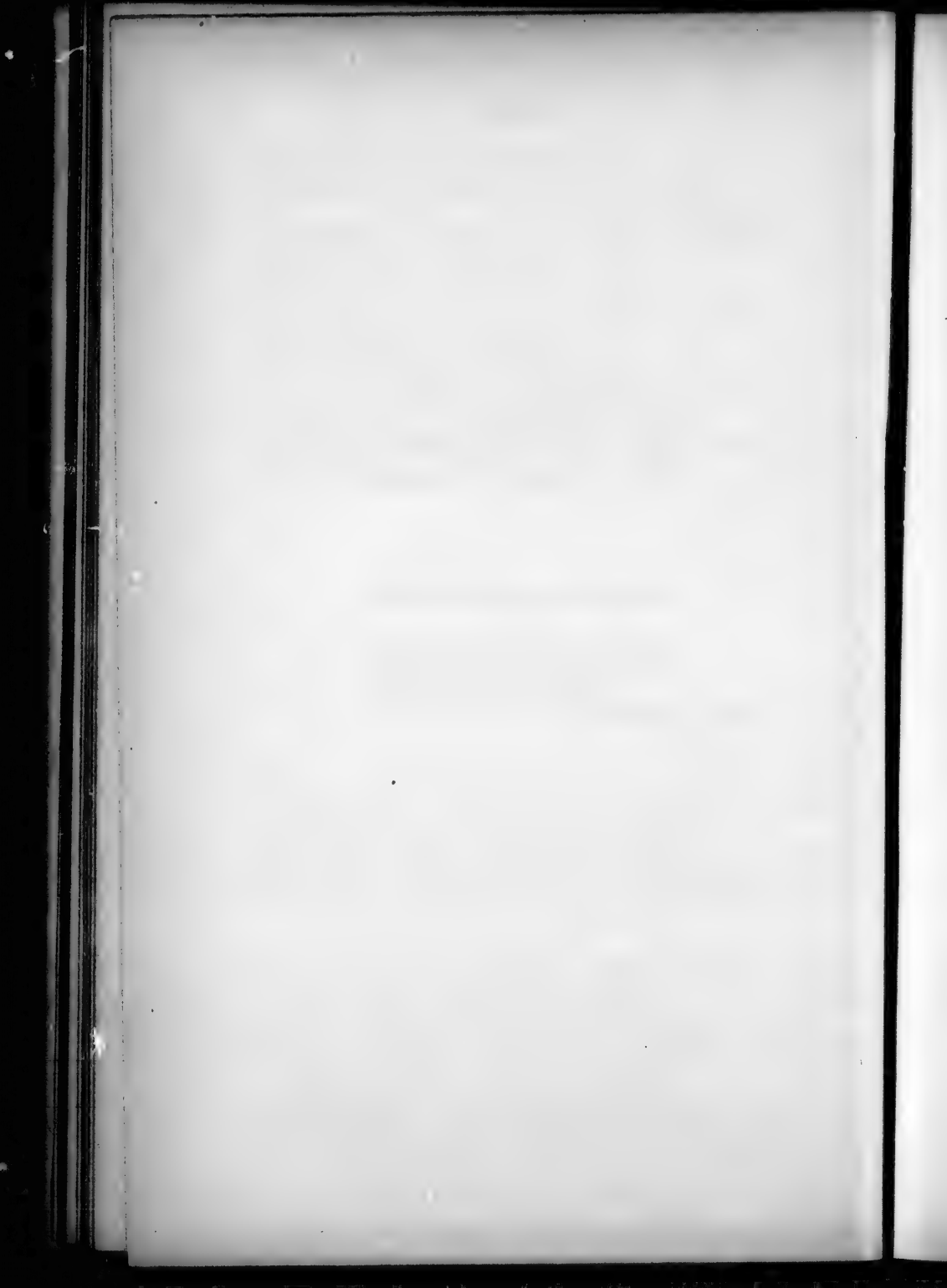
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Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst they
 awed,
 And sent my soul abroad,
 Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give, [20
 Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and live !

II.

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
 A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
 Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
 In word, or sigh, or tear—
 O Lady ! in this wan and heartless mood, 25
 To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,
 All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
 Have I been gazing on the western sky,
 And its peculiar tint of yellow green :
 And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye ! 30
 And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
 That give away their motion to the stars ;
 Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
 Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen ;
 Yon crescent Moon as fixed as if it grew 35
 In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue ;
 I see them all so excellently fair,
 I see, not feel how beautiful they are !

III.

My genial spirits fail ;
 And what can these avail 40
 To lift the smothering weight from off my breast.
 It were a vain endeavour,
 Though I should gaze for ever
 On that green light that lingers in the west :
 I may not hope from outward forms to win 45
 The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

IV.

O Lady ! we receive but what we give,
 And in our life alone does nature live :
 Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud !
 And would we aught behold of higher worth, 50

Than that inanimate cold world allowed
 To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
 Ah ! from the soul itself must issue forth,
 A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
 Enveloping the Earth—
 And from the soul itself must there be sent
 A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
 Of all sweet sounds the life and element !

55

V.

O pure of heart ! thou need'st not ask of me
 What this strong music in the soul may be !
 What, and wherein it doth exist,
 This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
 This beautiful and beauty-making power.
 Joy, virtuous Lady ! Joy that ne'er was given,
 Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
 Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and shower.
 Joy, Lady ! is the spirit and the power,
 Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,
 A new Earth and new Heaven,
 Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—
 Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—
 We in ourselves rejoice !
 And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
 All melodies the echoes of that voice,
 All colours a suffusion from that light.

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VI.

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
 This joy within me dallied with distress,
 And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
 Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness :
 For Hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
 And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.
 But now afflictions bow me down to earth :
 Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth,
 But oh ! each visitation
 Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
 My shaping spirit of Imagination.
 For not to think of what I needs must feel,

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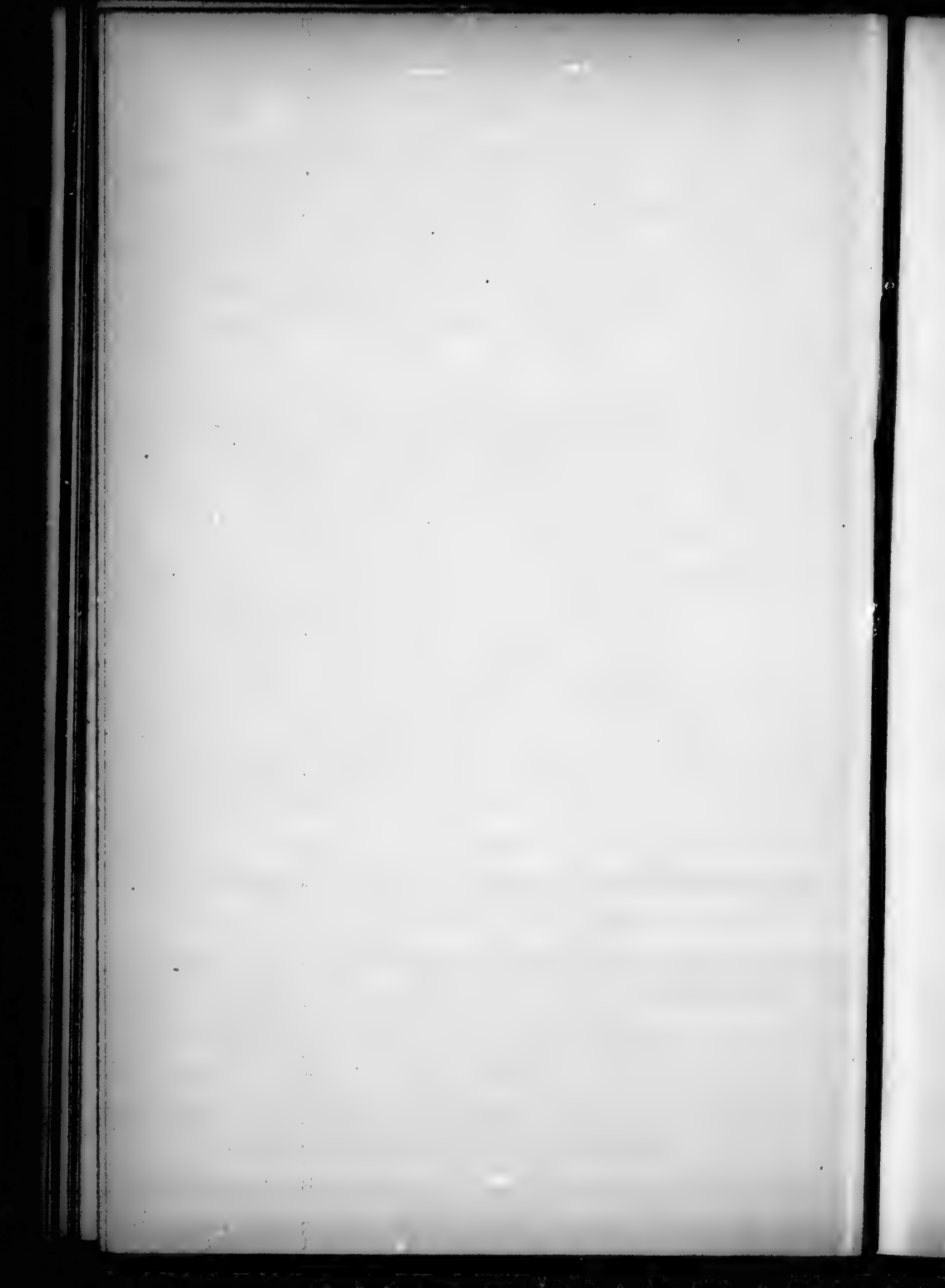
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But to be still and patient, all I can ;
 And haply by abstruse research to steal
 From my own nature all the natural man— 90
 'This was my sole resource, my orly plan :
 Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
 And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII.

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
 Reality's dark dream ! 95
 I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
 Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream
 Of agony by torture lengthened out
 That lute sent forth ! Thou Wind, that ravest without,
 Bare craig, or mountain-tairn,* or blasted tree, 100
 Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
 Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
 Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
 Mad Lutanist ! who in this month of showers,
 Of dark brown gardens, and of peeping flowers, 105
 Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,
 The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.
 Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds !
 Thou mighty Poet, e'en to frenzy bold !
 What tell'st thou now about ? 110
 'Tis of the rushing of a host in rout,
 With groans of trampled men, with smarting
 wounds—
 At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the
 cold !
 But hush ! there is a pause of deepest silence !
 And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd, 115
 With groans, and tremulous shudderings— all is over—
 It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud !
 A tale of less affright,
 And tempered with delight.
 As Otway's self had framed the tender lay, 120

* Tairn is a small lake, generally if not always applied to the lakes up in the mountains, and which are the feeders of those in the valleys. This address to the Storm-wind will not appear extravagant to those who have heard it at night, and in a mountainous country.

'Tis of a little child
 Upon a lonesome wild,
 Not far from home, but she hath lost her way ;
 And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
 And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother
 hear. 125

VIII.

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep :
 Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep !
 Visit her, gentle Sleep ! with wings of healing,
 And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
 May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling, 130
 Silent as though they watched the sleeping Earth !
 With light heart may she rise,
 Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
 Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice ;
 To her may all things live, from pole to pole, 135
 Their life the eddying of her living soul !
 O simple spirit, guided from above,
 Dear Lady ! friend devoutest of my choice,
 Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.

 YOUTH AND AGE.*

Verse, a breeze mid blossoms straying,
 Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
 Both were mine ! Life went a maying
 With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
 When I was young !
 When I was young ?—Ah, woful when !
 Ah ! for the change 'twixt Now and Then !
 This breathing house not built with hands,
 This body that does me grievous wrong,

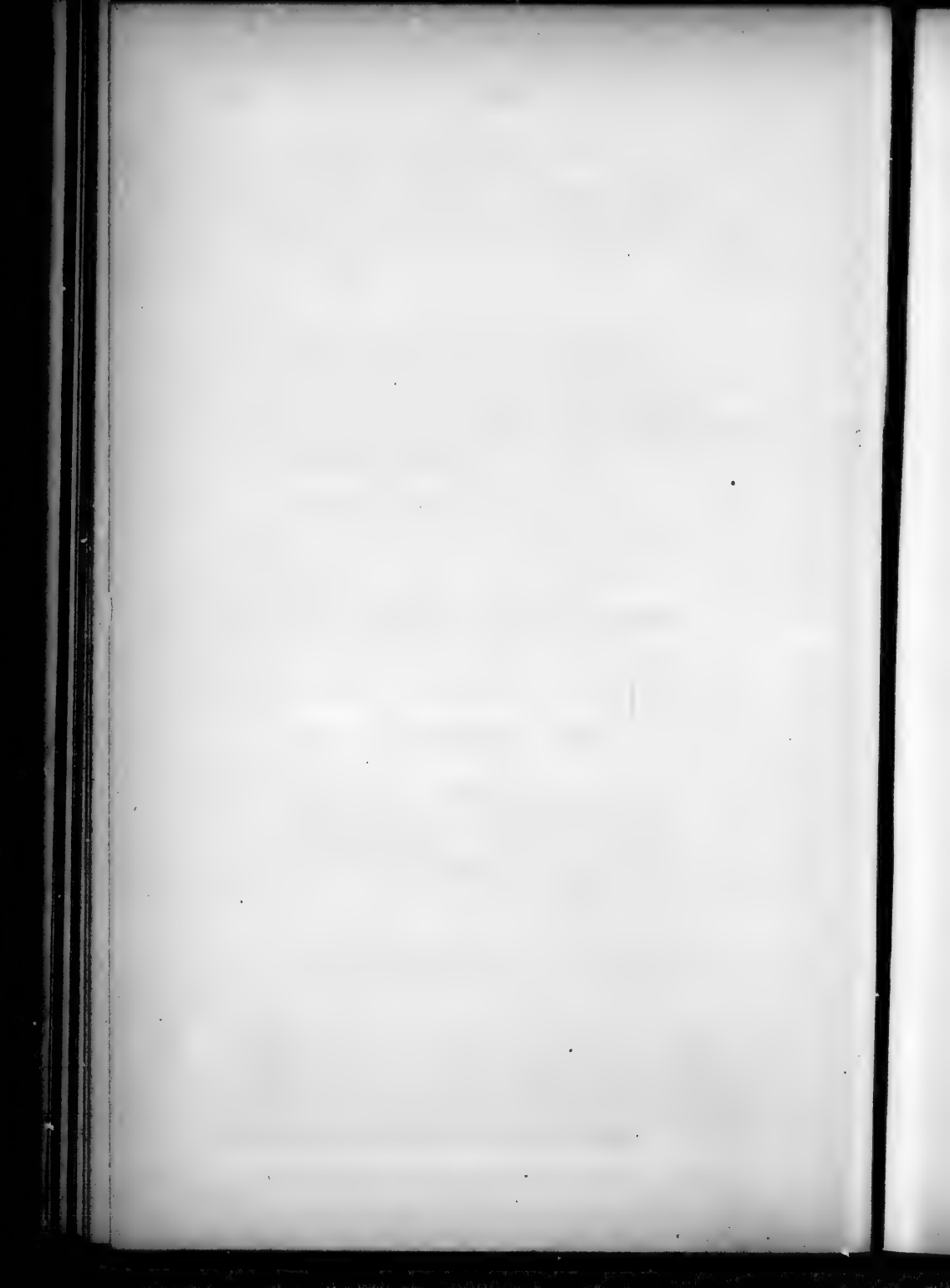
* With respect to the date of the admired composition, "Youth and Age," memories and opinions differ. It is the impression of the writer of this note that the first stanza, from "Verse, a breeze," to "liv'd in't together," was produced as late as 1824, and that it was subsequently prefixed to the second stanza, "Flowers are lovely," which is said to have been composed many years before. It appears, from the Author's own statement, already quoted, that the last verse was not added till 1827, to which period the poem, considered as a whole, may very well be assigned.

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O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands, 10
 How lightly then it flashed along :—
 Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
 On winding lakes and rivers wide,
 That ask no aid of sail or oar,
 'That fear no spite of wind or tide ! 15
 Nought cared this body for wind or weather
 When Youth and I liv'd in't together.

Flowers are lovely ; Love is flower-like ;
 Friendship is a sheltering tree ;
 O ! the joys that came down shower-like, 20
 Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
 Ere I was old.

Ere I was old !—Ah, woful Ere,
 Which tells me, Youth's no longer here !
 O Youth ! for years so many and sweet, 25
 'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
 I'll think it but a fond conceit—
 It cannot be that thou art gone !
 Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd :—
 And thou wert aye a masker bold ! 30
 What strange disguise hast now put on,
 To make believe that thou art gone ?
 I see these locks in silvery slips,
 This drooping gait, this altered size :
 But springtide blossoms on thy lips, 35
 And tears take sunshine from thine eyes !
 Life is but thought : so think I will
 That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
 But the tears of mournful eve ! 40
 Where no hope is, life's a warning
 That only serves to make us grieve,
 When we are old :

That only serves to make us grieve
 With oft and tedious taking-leave, 45
 Like some poor nigh-related guest,
 That may not rudely be dismiss'd ;
 Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
 And tells the jest without the smile.

NOTES.

ODE TO THE DEPARTING YEAR.

COLERIDGE's strong sympathy with the French Revolution was shewn before the writing of this ode (in the last days of 1796) in his "Religious Musings," written in 1794, in his "Conciones ad Populum," a course of lectures which denounced Pitt and the war with France in the strongest terms, and in the *Watchman*, a periodical published every eighth day, but soon discontinued.

The year 1796 had been marked by varying success in the great struggle between the French Republic and its enemies.

On the one hand Bonaparte's brilliant victories at Montenotte, Lodi, Arcola, &c., had shattered Austria's power in Italy; and General Hoche had finally suppressed the Royalist rising in La Vendée, shewing there a humanity that not only contrasted strongly with the savagery of his predecessors, but might well raise hopes of the dawning on France of a new era. On the other hand the French commanders in Germany had been baffled by the skill of the Archduke Charles.

The ode is a grand conception expressed in language of uniform dignity and often of great beauty.

The terms "strophe" and "anti-strophe" used in the Argument refer to divisions of the Greek choral odes, the anti-strophe being sung while the chorus circled round the altar in the contrary direction to that observed while singing the strophe, the epode being sung while standing still. The rule that the anti-strophe should have the same metrical structure as the strophe is here observed only in stanza IV., which answers to I.

Three kinds of metre occur in this and the next ode:—
Iambic, as "Thy dárk | inwó | ven hár | moníes | to héar;"
Trochaic, as "Stárting | fróm my | sécret | sádness;"
Anapaestic, as "At cow' | ardly díe | tance yet kínd | líng with pride."
Iambic lines admit other feet than Iambes, e.g.,
"Spírit | who sweep | est," &c.

I.

1—*Spirit*, "the Divine Providence that regulates into one vast harmony all the events of time." This invocation contains a sublime metaphor.

3—*Harmonies*, well expresses the manner in which the various series of contemporaneous and apparently conflicting events blend into one grand result as do the various parts in music.

Inwoven, complicated, like the harmonies of some difficult work of one of the grand composers. *Dark*, hard to understand.

4—*Mine eye fixed*, &c. His mind gaining from meditation on the unchangeableness of the Divine purposes, power calmly to view the perplexing and often disheartening course of human events.

5—*Mortal*, natural to a mortal when contemplating such themes.

9—*Sadness*, at the slow progress of what he deemed the cause of Freedom.

10—*No unholy madness*, litotes for holy enthusiasm. *Madness*, the frenzy supposed to be brought on by poetic or prophetic inspiration. Compare Virgil's description of the Sibyl—

"But, yet resisting Picebus, in her cave
The awful prophetess infuriate strives
To shake from off her brow the mighty god;
So much the more he tires her raving mouth,
Tames her wild heart, and trains with strong control."—Kennedy.

11—*Entered*, "that I had entered." *Foreclosed*, shut out, the primary meaning of the word, which is the old French *forclos*, from *foris*, outside, and *clausus*, shut.

II.

13—*Recent*, new made.

14—*Direr* than the tomb, as had been the Bastille, and still were many in Russia, &c.

15—*Distemper*, disease; properly a "wrong mixture" of the bodily "humors," this being according to the ancient physicians the cause of disease.

16—*Thence where*, strictly speaking, a more correct expression than the common "from where." So,

"There where a few torn shrubs the place disclose."

17—*Two bright torches*. Eros, the Greek god of love, is sometimes pictured as carrying more than one torch.

18—*Love illumines manhood's maze*. Gives man at once a steady object and a hope in the perplexities of life. "The best way to bring a clever young man who has become sceptical and unsettled to reason, is to make him *feel* something in any way. Love, if sincere and unworldly, will bring him to a sense of something real and actual."—*Table Talk*.

20—*Hope*, the most natural feeling in a parent gazing on his young children.

Perplexed, confused.

27—*Bower*, chamber, as in Chaucer's

"Full meet was her bower (bedroom) and eek her halle."

The poet summons all to turn from private joys and griefs to the cause of Mankind. The enumeration awakens our sympathies.

31—*Portentous birth*, the production of a state of things ominous to existing institutions. For the sake of impressiveness this is attributed to nature, not to society. A *portent* was an omen, generally a threatening one.

32—*Weep and rejoice*, over the sufferings of the existing struggle and the benefits that were to follow.

33—*The dread name*, of Pitt, whom Coleridge regarded as the stirrer up of the European monarchs against France. Thus in "Fire, Famine and Slaughter," Fire says,

"Letters four do form his name."

And again,

"Ninety months he by my troth
Has richly catered for you both."

36—*Justice and truth* were to be promoted by the triumph of *Liberty, i. e.*, of the French Republic. But see the following ode.

40—*Conqueress*, Catherine of Russia, the "Semiramis of the North." A native of Upper Saxony, she dethroned, in 1763, her husband, the Czar Peter, who was brutally strangled by her accomplice, Count Orloff. She seized the Crimea, and was the chief mover in the infamous partitions of Poland. Her sudden death before she could send effectual aid to the allied sovereigns had a great influence on the event of the war.

42—*Mailed Monarch*, the Emperor Francis, the head of the coalition against the Revolution. *Mailed*, in warlike guise. These sovereigns Coleridge denounces in the *Religious Musings* as

"That foul woman of the North,
The lustful murderess of her wedded lord!
And he connatural mind! whom * * *
Some Fury fondled in her hate to man."

43—*Stunned*, attributive of "hag," *i. e.*, Catherine, "insatiate" of conquest and slaughter.

Mace, more appropriate than the conventional "dart," as implying a crushing blow.

Twice mortal. See Revelation xxi., 8.

45—*Murder's lurid face*. The ghastly faces of those murdered to glut her ambition—her husband, and also the Poles slain in the struggle of 1793-4.

46—*Manes*, the Latin word for spirits; pronounced *māns*.

47—*Warsaw's plain*, in the storming of Praga, a suburb of Warsaw, on the 4th November, 1794, when ten thousand soldiers fell, and twelve thousand peaceful citizens of both sexes were massacred.

48—*Ismail*, a Turkish ~~fortress~~ stormed by Suwaroff in 1790, when a general massacre of its people took place. Hence the epithet, "exterminating fiend," l. 55.

49—*Human ruin*. Heaps of human corpses.

"Of forty thousand that had mann'd the wall,
Some hundreds breath'd."

54—*Misty train*, shadowy troops.

57—*Foul her life*. Her example encouraged systematic immorality. *Death-fires*. See note on the Ancient Mariner, line 128.

IV.

64—*Cloudy throne*. "Clouds and darkness are about him." Psalm xcvi., 2.

65—*Memory sits*. The remembrance of men's deeds is ever present.

67—*Storied'st*, relatedst the sad events of 1796.

71—*Chaired gods*, godlike angels, assembled in their choirs.

72—*Spirit of the Earth*, a fine personification (see lines 80-102) of the prayers of the oppressed calling for Divine intervention. Contrast with "Ambition" (l. 38) which has little personality.

V.

75—*Hush'd*, not hush't.

76—*Lampads seven*, properly the golden candlesticks; but here the reference is to the "Seven Lamps" in Revelation iv., 5.

84—*Proffered insult* refers to the interference of Austria and Russia in the internal affairs of France, and in particular, perhaps, to the Duke of Brunswick's insolent proclamation in 1792, which said that anarchy had "annihilated the political existence of France."

85—*Masked hate*, probably referring to Pitt's reluctance to begin a war, which reluctance Coleridge then misjudged.

88—*Afric's wrongs*. The slave trade was then legal, and continued so till 1807.

91—*Deaf Synod*, Parliament, which he deemed "deaf" to the voice of justice and mercy.

Gifts, bribes.

94—*Thankless*, for the blessings described in stanza VII.

95—*Her quiver full*. Absolute phrase. The "quiver" is appropriate to a country which had won so many victories by the valor of her archers.

97—*Dark'ing*, properly an adverb, in the dark, as in Milton's "The wakeful bird sings darkling."

101—*Cf.*, "The whole creation groaneth."

VI.

106—*Phantom*, the vision and especially the apparition of the Earth Spirit calling for vengeance.

115—*Foredone*, exhausted ; should be written *fordone* cf.,

"If either salves, or oyles, or herbes, or charms
A *fordonne* wight from dore of death mote raise."—*Spenser*.

Fore, or rather *for*, means completely, as in *forlorn*, and the obsolete *forbled*, *forpined*.

119-20—This picture of the soldier's disturbed sleep among the slain forms a striking conclusion to the vision.

VII.

121—*Not yet enslaved*. The first edition had :—

"O doomed to fall, enslaved and vile,"

which is more in keeping with the rest of the ode than is the present reading, substituted when the poet's views had changed.

123, &c.—This is perhaps the finest description of England in existence. It is instructive to observe how much more natural and at the same time more picturesque is its language than that even of Goldsmith's fine lines :—

"Where Britain courts the western spring ;
Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than famed Hydaspes glide.
There all around the gentlest breezes stray,
There gentlest music melts on every spray."

The contrast between these two passages well illustrates one of the main differences between the poets of the "school of Pope" and those of the present century.

131—*Hence*, from the ocean's protection. *Fearless*, free from alarm.

The peaceful beauty of this stanza heightens the effect of the indignant outburst that follows.

VIII.

136—*At cowardly distance*, engaging in a contest in which, owing to her insular position, she incurred little risk. Coleridge did not then see that the seizure of Holland had forced war upon England. *Secure* probably has its primitive sense, "careless."

Strange-eyed. Coleridge, in revising his poems, "pruned the double epithets with no sparing hand," but left this and "young-eyed joys."

142—*Central fires*. The meaning is that England was about to undergo a convulsion like that which the outburst of the earth's central fire would produce in the physical world, a convulsion that would startle even the Spirit of Destruction, described in the *Religious Musings* as

"The old Hag, unconquerable, huge,
Creation's eyeless drudge."

The "perilous couch" by "red volcanic stream" heightens the impressive picture, while the rhythm of line 142 is an "echo to the sense."

145—*Dragon-eyes*, like those of a serpent.

Leap, perhaps with joy.

IX.

150—*Birds of warning.* The ancients believe that the notes of certain birds indicate Divine displeasure. Their singing "in vain" implies that England will not take warning; and her ruin is so near that already the "brood of prey" are flying towards the feast she is to supply.

151—*Famish'd*, by England's long exemption from invasion. This epithet as well as groaning (*i. e.*, burdened) wind is intended to heighten the feeling of horror.

154—*The evil thing.* The war with France, which Coleridge then regarded as one against liberty and humanity.

156—*Soliciting.* This is of course a fancy touch. Coleridge never lived by agriculture, though he had expected to do so in the Pantisocratic colony of Susquehanna, which plan he still perhaps cherished.

159—*Sabbath*, rest, the primary meaning of the word.

161—*God's image*, &c., the human soul. The thought is a fitting conclusion to this noble ode.

FRANCE.

COLERIDGE'S revolutionary ardor cooled during the year 1797. In later years he said of the Revolution, "It had all my wishes, none of my expectations." Being "in religion," as he says himself, "at the opposite pole" from the Jacobins, he must have seen with displeasure the violence by which they regained power in 1797, and the shameless plundering of Italy by its "Liberators." What thoroughly opened his eyes, however, was the wanton attack upon the sister Republic of Switzerland in December, the objects and results of which are anticipated in the present ode. Coleridge, though an anti-Jacobin, continued an opponent of Mr. Pitt and of the war.

This ode, though it has its own peculiar beauties, necessarily falls behind its predecessor in vigor, for it is in the main defensive, though the *Morning Post* went quite too far in styling it a "Recantation." Compare lines 27, *seqq.*

Shelley called it the finest ode in the language, influenced, perhaps as Mr. Traill suggests, by the melody which characterizes it as well as nearly all Coleridge's poetry, and rises to its height in "Christabel."

I.

1—*Clouds.* Why these are thus apostrophized will appear from the last stanza.

4—*Homage to eternal laws*, the essence of true liberty, as opposed to license.

6—*Midway*, used here as a preposition. *Perilous slope*, the steep side of some mountain.

7—*Imperious*, exercising command (Lat. imperium) over the wind, so as to convert it into solemn music.

9—Probably equivalent to "inspire."

11—*Fancies holy*, such as those embodied in his *Religious Musings*.

13—*Beyond the guess of folly*, beyond what fools can conceive, especially the numerous class of fools that decry everything higher than money-making.

18—*Will*, emphatic, "is determined."

20—*Still*, always.

II.

22—*Her giant limbs*. A fine description of the uprising of France at the Revolution. Note the force given here, as well as in the first stanza, by the personification.

27—*A slavish band*. So he calls the opponents of the Revolution, except, of course, Burke.

29—*Like fiends*. A powerful simile; showing, too, that Coleridge did not retract his denunciation of their conduct.

30—*The Monarchs*, of Austria, Prussia, Spain and Sardinia.

In evil day, for themselves, who were defeated; for France, which suffered from the Reign of Terror to which their interference contributed.

33—*Friendships*, especially with Charles Lamb, and later with Southey.

Patriot (i. e., patriotic) *emotion* is like Goldsmith's "patriot passion."

37—*Tyrant-quelling lance*, the power of France.

38—*Shame*, object of *sang*. *Vain*, since they were followed into their own possessions.

39—*Partial*, turned aside by private feeling.

41—*Pæans*. Hymns, properly in honor of Apollo, sung by the Greeks before battles and after victories. Hence "songs of victory."

III.

43—*What*, supply "matters it." *Blasphemy*, as of Klootz, Hébert, the apostate Bishop Gobet, and other Atheists, and the orgies in honor of the "Goddess of Reason."

45—*Wove*, devised; the complicated movements of the dance being aptly compared to the pattern of some variegated tissue. The reference is, of course, to the horrors of the Reign of Terror.

47—*Ye storms*, &c. We have here a fine example of poetic argument, which is not an ordinary argument in metre, as often in Pope; but a striking illustration put more tersely and forcibly than would be possible in prose. *That*, preferred in verse to the harsh-sounding *which*.

50—*The dissonance*, the discord between joy at the recovery of liberty and the fury of the Terrorists.

Ceased, at the downfall of Robespierre, when ten thousand political prisoners were set free in Paris alone.

51—*Her front*, &c., well nigh obliterated the traces of civil strife, as in La Vendé, at Lyons, and at Toulon, by her brilliant victories abroad.

53—*Insupportably* (irresistibly) *advancing*. A phrase borrowed from *Samson Agônistes*:

"When insupportably his foot advanced
In spite of their prond arms and warlike tools
Spurned them to death by troops."

It is, however, absurd to ground a charge of plagiarism on this imitation, for happy phrases become the property of the language of all who use it.

62—By shewing in her happiness the benefits of freedom.

63—Compare,

"Return pure Faith! return meek Piety!
The kingdoms of the world are yours."—*Religious Musings*.

IV.

64—Why *those*, not *these*?

66—*Helvetia*, Switzerland. The ancient Helvetii possessed the greater part of the modern Switzerland.

78—*Perished*. As yet but little blood had been shed; but in March fierce conflicts took place at Frauenbrunne, Graholtz, and Berne, where "the Swiss peasants, though defeated, faced about with the utmost resolution. . . . The place of the dead and the wounded was instantly supplied by crowds of every age and sex." Other conflicts followed at Morgarten and in the Valais.

72—*To scatter—to disinherit*—are in a sort of apposition to "these" in line 80.

Traitorous guilt, as of Ochs and other chiefs of the Democratic faction, who had invited French intervention to establish their pet form of Government, which Ochs described as "the only means of rendering Switzerland the permanent ally of France."

75—What made their stormy wilds so dear? See the "Traveller," lines 175-8.

76—*Inexpiable*, &c., to mingle with the pure liberty of the Swiss a taint of corruption and violence that cannot be purged out. *Inexpiable* is properly that cannot be atoned for (from *piare*, to atone).

78—*Adulterous*, forsaking its allegiance to God. Cf. James, iv., 4.

80—*Champion*, self-styled. The French Convention declared that it would "grant fraternity and assistance to all people who wish to recover their liberty."

81—*Low lust of sway*. A happy phrase. Why "low?"

82—*Murderous prey.* Plunder obtained by murder. The poet correctly divined the motive of the invasion. Bonaparte, the secret mover of these villainies, had, while passing through Berne, "asked a question of sinister import as to the amount of its treasure"; and the plunder of that Canton alone in 1798 amounted to 40,000,000 francs. Moreover, 40,000 French soldiers lived for months at free quarters, paid and maintained by the unfortunate Swiss.

83—Their robbing a free people was an insult to the cause of liberty. The ancients dedicated their spoils in the shrines of their gods.

85—*Dark, unenlightened.* In the *Watchman* Coleridge had asserted—to the disgust of many of his readers—that the only hope for liberty lay in the precepts of the Gospel and in popular education.

86—*Their own compulsion,* not by external force, as other slaves, but from the baseness of their own nature. Compare Cowper's lines :—

"He is the freeman whom the Truth makes free," &c.—*Task*, B. V., 733.

88—*A heavier chain.* Their excesses only make them more hopeless slaves, their freedom being a mere name. Note how forcibly and briefly the thought is presented here as also in ll. 47-8.

94—In other words liberty will not abide among men. *Delays*, causes to remain, detains.

95—*Priestcraft.* At this time Coleridge's unorthodox notions and sympathy with the Revolution had alienated him from the established clergy of England as well as of foreign countries.

Harpies. The Harpies, literally "Snatchers," were fabulous beings described by some Greek and Latin poets as disgusting monsters, being birds with heads of maidens, pale with hunger and armed with long claws. Sent to torment one Phineus, they either carried away his food or rendered it uneatable. The word here means *greatly*.

Minions, favorites, generally used in a bad sense.

The conclusion is by some deemed unsatisfactory; but it is hard to see what other there could be. An ardent but disappointed lover of liberty, the poet was forced to seek it in inanimate Nature. Note the sublimity of the closing picture.

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

This poem, written in 1806, not in strictness an ode, is a touching memorial of the friendship between the two greatest poets of this century—a friendship which brought out the best points in each, and to which we owe the "Ancient Mariner." A most pleasing trait of Coleridge's character is the freedom

from jealousy shown by his strong admiration of his great rival, which produced not only this poem, but also that masterpiece of criticism, the dissertation on Wordsworth's poetry contained in chapters xvi.-xxii. of the "Biographia Literaria," itself intended to trace the development of Coleridge's "individual mind."

The poem referred to is the "Prelude" (i. e., to the "Excursion"), addressed to Coleridge, and at one time deemed by him superior even to the "Excursion." In his "Table Talk" he adds:—"I think Wordsworth possessed more of the genius of a great philosophic poet than any man I ever knew, or, as I believe, that has existed in England since Milton." And again, "He will wear the crown while English is English."

The sad tone of the references to Coleridge himself is, no doubt, owing to the habit of opium-eating which blighted his life.

1—This praise has been justified by the illustrious men who have been admirers of Wordsworth.

2—*That lay.* Of it Wordsworth says:—"When the author retired to his native mountains with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation he undertook to record in verse the origin and progress of his own powers" He adds that it formed, as it were, an ante-chapel to the main work.

3—*Prophetic*, as indicating Wordsworth's future achievements from the view it gave of his mental history.

10—*Vernal growth.* The growth of plants in spring is well put forward as the type of imperceptible progress.

Quickens, gives life to Cf., "Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

13—*Smiles spontaneous . . . fears*, of infancy.

14—*Tides and currents*, respectively denote thoughts awakened by external things, and the independent action of the mind itself. Before "by . . . power" supply *determined*.

16—*Awful*, momentous, and therefore awe-inspiring.

19—*Reflectal*, from nature, proceeding in the first-place from his own mind and mistaken for a light bestowed by external Nature. So in the "Prelude,"

"An auxiliary light
Came from my mind, which on the setting sun
Bestowed new splendor."

This thought is grandly wrought out in lines 47-58 of the Ode to Dejection.

21—*Hyblean murmurs.* The working of poetic thought, gentle yet full of activity, is compared to the hum of bees,

Hybla being a place in Sicily (uncertain which of three) famed for its honey.

23—*Vales and glens*. "Glen" denotes a wilder hollow than "vale," the Celtic word being appropriate to this feature of mountain scenery. *Native*. The burden of the "Prelude" is the effect on the poet's mind of the scenery of the lake country, "The Paradise where I was reared," and the Alps.

25—*Secret*, secluded ; like

"The secret top
Of Oreb or of Sinai."

28—*Social sense*. The faculty which made him take interest in social movements, especially the French Revolution.

29—*Distending*, constantly growing wider, a sense which "extending," which is the more obvious term, would not well bear.

30—*France, &c.* This simile graphically describes the agitated state of France at the time of the suspension of the King from office, and the calling of the National Convention after the storming of the Tuilleries on the 10th August, 1792, an event as unexpected as thunder from a clear sky.

33—*Thine own brows*, as well as those of the French. Wordsworth so strongly approved of the Revolution that he thought of settling in France.

37—*The general heart*. The Revolution had many sympathizers in all countries, not only the young and ardent, but also statesmen like Fox.

38—*Hope*, of an age of universal brotherhood.

"Bliss was it on that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven."

"The whole earth
The beauty wore of promise."

39—*Struck down*, by the horrors of the Reign of Terror, and by Napoleon's despotism. *Summoned homeward*, forced to confine itself to thoughts of self-improvement.

41—*Man's absolute self*, human nature considered in itself, apart from all political schemes.

The Angel, probably the allusion is to those that talked with St. John in the Revelation.

45—*Chosen*, by the will, and thence forward ruling it in both "action" and the pursuit of "joy."

46—*Orphic*, philosophic and mystical.

At the dawn of Greek philosophy certain societies strove by mystic rites and holy living to attain moral purification and life after death. They were called Orphic, from Orpheus, a poet of whom it was fabled that he had, while alive, visited Hades. There were also poems on kindred subjects, commonly called Orphic, of which only fragments survive. Hence a poem deal-

ing with philosophical or theological subjects may be called Orphic. Compare,

"Some philosophic song
Of truth that cherishes our daily life.
* * * * * immortal verse,
Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre."

49—*Awed the air*,
The poet's feelings being, as usual, attributed to external things.

50-1—*Viewed*, &c. He anticipated the time when Wordsworth would be ranked with the greatest geniuses the world has produced.

52—*Have all one age*, are, as it were, contemporaries, as their works, being immortal, exercise influence simultaneously.

53—*Shed influence*. An expression borrowed from astrology, which conceived the stars to be sources whence streams of power flowed upon (*insuere*, to flow into) men. Compare, "The sweet influences of the Pleiades."

54—*Is not with them*. Is as nothing to them; does not exist as far as they are concerned.

56—*Sacred roll*, as of the Scriptures or lists of prophets and priests of old.

Those, the great men.

57—*Gradual*, steadily increasing, no mushroom growth of popularity. A true prophecy.

Archives, properly what belongs to the Government, hence official records.

Linked. Explained in the succeeding line by "continuous." Cf. Milton's

"Linked sweetness long drawn out."

64—*The drowned*, who feel great pain while returning to life. It would seem that Coleridge's sudden cessation of poetic effort was partly caused by his applying himself to critical and philosophical pursuits in order to deaden the keenness with which he felt certain evils. See *Dejection*, ll. 87-91.

70—*In vain*. Coleridge was sadly conscious how little he had effected considering his magnificent intellect and his vast erudition. In later years he took a more cheerful view of his achievements, and in the last lines of "Biographia Literaria," chap. x., he virtually retracts this lament.

76—*Self-same grave*, as if what works he had produced would not long survive him. So Swift says of himself:—

"Departed, and his works must follow."

77—"That way," let my thoughts travel "no more."

80—*Unhealthful road*. The history of his past life.

81—*Poisons of self-harm*. Either harming himself by so painful a retrospect, or calling to mind how he had injured himself.

86—*Nobler mind*. The nobler and better part of his mind. Coleridge insisted much on the distinction between the "reason" and the lower faculty, the "understanding."

91—*More than wintry.* More furious.

92—*Halcyon*, the kingfisher, fabled of old to hatch its eggs in or close to the sea, a calm prevailing during the time of the process. The halcyon is here an emblem of assured hope.

95—*Eve following eve*; for the "Prelude" is a long poem.

98—Scanned, "My sóul | lay lís | t'ning like | a dé | vout child," *devout* having to be accented on the first syllable.

100—*Surges*, as the ocean is driven along by the wind.

102—*Foam*. With the foot-note compare Darwin's description of a similar scene:—"Every part of the surface which during the day is seen as foam, now glowed with a pale light. The vessel drove before her bows two billows of liquid phosphorus, and in her wake she was followed by a milky train. As far as the eye could reach, the crest of every wave was bright."

105—*Swelling*, drawn peacefully by Wordsworth's genius, as is the ocean by the moon.

106—*Strong*. Wordsworth's manly sturdiness formed a strong contrast to Coleridge's irresolute character.

Comforter, strengthener.

107—Scan, "Thy lóng | sustáin | éd sóng | final | ly closed."

115—A fine conclusion, and natural to Coleridge's devout temper, which, in spite of his weakness of character, gives a dignity to almost all his works.

ODE TO DEJECTION.

This ode was written on the 4th of April, 1802. Its sad and despairing tone was owing to the depression caused by ill health, and perhaps intensified by the use of opium, to which about this time Coleridge became enslaved.

It is worthy of note that in this ode we learn what caused Coleridge to turn from poetry to metaphysics, namely, that each visitation of pain, whether bodily or mental, "suspended his shaping spirit of imagination," and that to find relief and to avoid exciting his sensibilities, which where now a source of pain only, he had begun devoting himself to "abstruse research," which had now "almost grown the habit" of his mind.

I.

2—*Sir Patrick Spence.*

A Scottish * ballad by an unknown author, which relates how Sir Patrick Spence, sent by the King to bring over the King of Norway's daughter, was shipwrecked on his way home. The passage reads:—

"O say no sae, my master deir,
For I feir a deadlie storm;
Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone
Wi' the auld moone in her arme."

* Of late its antiquity has been denied.

6—*Rakes*, scrapes.

7—*Eolian lute*, from Æolus, the god of the winds, an instrument which is played by the wind.

8—So as not to recall the happiness he enjoyed when he wrote the *Eolian Harp*.

9—*Winter bright*. Bright as in winter, the poem being written in April.

19—*Sent abroad*, not turning on his own troubles.

II.

21—*A grief without a pang*, uniformly oppressing to the mind; without any special paroxysm. *Heartless*, despairing, having lost heart.

26—*Throstle*, the thrush, a poetic word. It invited him to more cheerful thoughts.

30—Why “—”? See line 38.

32—*Give away*. Make the stars seem to move while they themselves appear to stand still.

38—*Not feel*, derive no pleasure from their beauty.

III.

39—*Genial*, cheerful.

40—*These*—the moon and other natural objects so beautifully described above.

46—*Whose fountains are within*. This thought, amplified in the next stanza, is the reverse of what Wordsworth generally inculcates. See, for example, the speech beginning

“I have seen
A curious child,”

near the end of book IV. of the “Excursion.” Wordsworth would never have spoken of the universe as “inanimate.”

IV.

47—*Receive*. Nature can show us only what our own minds infer from her appearances.

48—*Ours . . . shroud*. That is, nature seems joyous or gloomy according to the mood in which we ourselves are.

50—*Would we*, if we wish.

51—*Poor . . . crowd*. Those intent only on material prosperity and enjoyment.

57—*Life and element*, appositives to “voice.” “Element” is probably used in its old sense, the air that it breathes.

V.

60—The answer begins in line 64. It is in effect that all the beauty of the universe is appreciated only when the mind is tranquil and joyous.

64—*Joy*. Peace of mind.

Effluence, outflow. *Cloud* and *shower*, that is, both cause and effect in one ; which prompts to virtuous life, and in turn is enhanced by it.

68—*Wedding*, i. e., which Nature when wedding us bestows on us as a dowry.

69—*A new earth*, a power that makes the earth seem unlike what it does to others ; or makes it seem like the new earth that St. John saw in his vision.

72—*In ourselves*, happiness is an inward principle.

75—*Suffusion*, literally a pouring beneath, a gentle hue ; here an emanation.

VI.

76—*A time*. The time of his poetical activity, from 1794 to 1798.

Dallied with, trifled with, made light of.

81—*Not my own*. Successes which he never attained seemed then certain.

86—*Shaping*, creative, the old meaning of the word. The O. E. word for *Creator* was *scyppeud*, lit. "the shaper." The phrase *shaping spirit* forms a brief but exact definition of imagination.

87—*Not to think of*, and thereby increase the sorrows, real or as it would seem, partly imaginary, that he could not escape.

95—*The natural man*. To repress his natural disposition.

Part. His reasoning power.

VII.

95—*Reality's dark dream*, a reality dark and strange enough to be a hideous dream.

96—*Wind*. What he had wished for comes and diverts his melancholy thoughts.

99—*Lute*. See line 7.

100—*Tairn*, usually *tarn* ; see the foot-note.

102—*Were*, would be.

103—*Lutanist*, player on a lute, Low Latin *lutana*. Note the climax in the comparison of the wind successively to a player of wild music, an actor declaiming tragedy, and a great poet. *This month*, April.

106—*Yule*, the Norse word for Christmas.

120—*Otway*, a Poet of the Restoration, author of "Venice Preserved" and the "Orphan," of which Hallam says :—"They have both a deep pathos springing from the intense and unmerited distress of women." Of the part of Belvidera, the heroine of "Venice Preserved," he says :—"When that part is represented by such as we remember to have seen, no tragedy is honored by such a tribute not of tears alone, but of more agony than many would seek to endure."

Tender is therefore no expletive.

We now see how the storm could "send his thoughts abroad," and also what his "shaping spirit" could make out of so common a thing as the sound of a gale.

VIII.

129—*A mountain birth*, a local storm originating among the mountains. He was then in the Lake District.

136—*Eddying*, whirling, as of a river. May they all reflect the motions of her pure mind.

YOUTH AND AGE.

The second part of this poem was written over forty years before the last part. The first part was written long after the second.

1—*Verse*, poetry. Develop the metaphor in "a breeze straying."

3—*A maying*. Life was for a time a scene of enjoyment.

4—*Poesy*, literally "making" the composition of poetry.

6—*Woful when*. The word *when* is "woful," as showing that he now was young no longer.

8—*House*; cf., "Our earthly house of this tabernacle."

Grievous wrong, causes much pain and is a sad obstruction to his spirit. He was troubled nearly all his life with rheumatism, and, from the time of his visit to Malta, with an oppression of breathing.

12—*Trim skiffs*, steamboats, not then so familiar as to be unfit for a poetic figure.

18 38—We must remember that these lines were written in the poet's boyhood, whence their sportive tone.

24—*Fond conceit*, a foolish notion, "fond" once meaning foolish, as "Thou fond mad woman;" and "conceit" simply conception, thought, as "The horrible conceit of death and night."

29—*Vesper-bell*, evening bell, or bell that at last "ringeth for evensong."

37—*Life is but thought*, a sentiment characteristic of Coleridge.

39—*Dew drops*, &c. Thoughts like those contained in the preceding lines were pleasing fancies in youth, but are a sad reality in old age, "the evening of life."

44-47—Do "leave" and "dismist" from perfect rhymes with "grieve" and "guest?" Why?

47—*Without the smile*, that should be caused by it, if he had not outstayed his welcome.